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THE

HISTORY

OF THE

BRITISH EMPIRE IN INDIA.

BY

EDWARD THORNTON, Esq.,

AUTHOR OF "INDIA, ITS STATE AND PROSPECTS," &c. &c.

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VOLUME VI.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE author of the "History of British India" avails himself of the opportunity afforded by the publication of the concluding volume, to express his grateful sense of the patronage extended to it, as well by the public as by the Court of Directors of the East-India Company, whom he has the honour to serve.

Nothing beyond this acknowledgment would have been called for, had not representations been addressed to the Court by individuals, who considered that they had reason to complain of some animadversions contained in the work. The author, therefore, feels it incumbent on him to state, that for the views and opinions advanced, either in the present or in the preceding volumes, he, and he alone, is responsible; and he begs to

add, that he could not conscientiously have entered on the preparation of an historical work, or have persevered in the labour, except in the exercise of an unfettered judgment.

Those familiar with the subjects discussed can scarcely require to be informed that he has written in this spirit, as the opinions expressed on some very important questions are not in accordance with those known to be entertained by the Court.

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IT might have been expected that the arrangement of the conflicting claims of the East-India Company and the ministers of the Crown, which took place in 1833, would have been followed by, at least, some brief period of repose; but such was not the fact. Early in 1834, an application on the part of the Crown was made to the Court of King's Bench for a mandamus to compel the Court of Directors, "under the Act of 1793,* to transmit certain despatches to the East Indies, they having been directed to do so by the Board" of Commissioners for the Affairs of India. These despatches related to the claims made upon the King of Oude

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* The Act of 1833 (except in a few instances, which did not include the case in question) was not to come into operation till the 22nd April, 1834. That of 1813 was silent on this subject.

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on the part of some of those unprincipled plunderers with whom India abounds, and who hover over misgoverned native states with the instinct under which birds of prey follow the march of armies. To those acquainted with the modern history of India, it will be unnecessary to state that Oude, like Arcot and Tanjore, afforded an ample field for the exercise of the arts of these persons. Though nominally subjected to a regular government, its state was actually that of anarchy. Its princes were generally needy, and its people always oppressed. The Vizier, Asoph-ul-Dowlah, like his brethren around him, was frequently in want of money to afford him the continued means of sensual gratification or ostentatious display, and, like them, he was beset by hordes of rapacious men, anxious to minister to his necessities, with a view to enriching themselves at the expense alike of the prince and his subjects. The embarrassed Vizier accepted the assistance of the friendly usurers, and dispensed his bonds in acknowledgment of its receipt with truly oriental munificence. Had these securities been satisfied in due course, the Vizier would have set an example altogether new in India. He did not thus violate the principles upon which Eastern rulers ordinarily administer their pecuniary affairs. All experience warrants the assertion that his creditors never could have expected that their claims should have been satisfied punctually, and to their full extent; and it may be regarded as quite certain that, had the Vizier thus agreeably exceeded their expectations,

he would not less have exceeded the measure of justice. Whether or not any of the alleged debts were altogether fabricated (as was certainly the case in the Carnatic and Tanjore claims), it is beyond doubt that demands, which in their origin might have some colour of justice, were, by those processes with which Indian usurers are so well acquainted, swelled to an amount calculated to excite a feeling of astonishment at the vast mass of rank vegetation springing from so inconsiderable a seed. Some of those processes are intimated in the following extract from the letter of the British resident at Lucknow, in the year 1796, a period when these debts were in the course of manufacture.

"The ruinous system of borrowing appears more and more daily to have been the cause of the general decline of this government. The debt has increased annually by uniting principal and interest, at thirty-six per cent., into new bonds, to which have been added new loans at twelve months, and some at shorter periods; bills bearing discount, tendered in place of ready money for *tuncahs* on the aumils, who again charge interest on the State for anticipation on their kists, while the actual appropriation of the revenues has been involved in the mysterious intricacies of false intercourse with the aumils' *tuncahs* debts, and separate allowances for purposes as confused as the general system of government has been."*

The Vizier, after a time, made an attempt to re-

* Letter from resident to the governor-general, 28th September, 1796.

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lieve himself from his complicated embarrassments by recourse to a mode not unusual with Eastern princes: he proposed to compound with his creditors, whom he divided into classes. The division, however, appears to have been guided by no principle having reference to the origin of the debts, or to any other point which might be supposed to give reasonable sanction to such an arrangement. The claims were all tainted by extortion. Some of them, perhaps, were fraudulent altogether, and others exaggerated by fraud; but these considerations seem to have had no influence with the Vizier or his advisers, and the distribution which they made regarded not the character of the claims; it was governed by the birth-place of the parties preferring them, and, it may be inferred, was adopted with the intention of paying as little as possible in any case. The claimants were divided into Europeans and natives: to the former class was offered one rate of composition, to the latter another, more favourable to the prince, and consequently less advantageous to the creditor. Among the native claimants were certain bankers, who refused the reduced dividend tendered to them, claiming to be placed on an equality with the European creditors of the Vizier, and adhered to their refusal. The consequence of their pertinacity was, that they obtained nothing, and it was the protracted wrongs of these unhappy usurers that, after the lapse of nearly forty years, appealed so strongly to the sympathy of one branch of the home government, as to induce that authority to resort to the

Court of King's Bench for the means of coercing the other.

Asoph-ul-Dowlah died in 1797, the year after the composition with his creditors was effected. To the temporary reign of his supposed son, Vizier Ali, succeeded that of Saadut Ali, the brother of Asoph-ul-Dowlah, and, from the definitive treaty concluded with this prince, any recognition of his obligation to discharge the debts of his predecessor was scrupulously excluded. In the preliminary engagement, there was a provision for the liquidation of the "just debts" of the former Vizier, and, if the claims of the usurious bankers could have been regarded as falling within the category, they might have benefited by the stipulation, had it been upheld. But in framing the definitive treaty this provision was omitted, and the following reason was assigned by the governor-general for its disappearance:—"The obligation contracted by the Nabob, for the payment of the just debts of his predecessor, is altogether omitted, not only as contrary to that principle of non-interference in the claims of individuals which this government has invariably adopted, but from the consideration that the stipulation would involve us in the necessity of inquiring into the justice of all claims, and constitute the Company, in some measure, a guarantee for procuring the liquidation of them, which would be attended with very serious embarrassment."* The bankers, who had rejected the terms of composition accepted by other

* Minute of Sir John Shore, 5th March, 1798.

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native creditors, were thus left, and properly left, to their own unassisted means of inducing a prince, whose master-passion was avarice, to pay debts contracted by another. Their success was such as, under the circumstances, might have been expected, and, probably, such as they deserved. The precise particulars of their claims are incapable of being investigated, but it is notorious that the debt, however contracted originally, had been enormously swelled by charges for interest. The precise rate of interest seems in some measure uncertain, but it was not less than twenty-four per cent. per annum, and probably was as high as thirty-six per cent.—and a claim thus made up would admit of very considerable reduction before those who urged it could be subjected to any actual loss. The claimants had rejected a composition which others had accepted—they hoped to obtain something more, and they found themselves unable to obtain any thing. They made an experiment, and they suffered the consequences of its failure. They were dissatisfied, naturally, indeed, though not very reasonably, for it has been justly observed, that "loans at such an exorbitant rate of interest cannot justly be considered in any other light than as gambling transactions."* The lenders in this case were too well acquainted with the character of the princely borrowers of Asia in general, and with that of the Vizier in particular, to regard the loan as a regu-

* Report of Committee of Correspondence of East-India Company, 31st May, 1822.

lar and safe transaction of business, in which great profit was to be realized, while no extraordinary risk was to be incurred nor any extraordinary difficulty encountered.

But the bankers and their representatives were not disposed to relinquish their claim, however slight the chance of enforcing it. In addition to the applications made to the government of Oude, which it may be presumed were sufficiently numerous and urgent, they submitted, through a course of years, a series of appeals to the British authorities, varying in their tone as in the mode in which they were preferred. These were prosecuted through an avowed agent,* who manifested a degree of zeal and pertinacity which, if he were nothing more than an agent, may be regarded as singular, if not unprecedented. He filed a bill in equity against the Company, but, in little more than a month, applied for an order for its dismissal. He transmitted memorials and addressed letters to the Court of Directors, at one time praying that they would appoint an early period for the satisfaction and discharge of the claim of his constituents—principal and interest, the latter accumulated at the rates already mentioned; at another time, more modestly, imploring that the court would transmit instructions to the government of Fort William to compel immediate payment by the Vizier; and, subsequently, asking, with a further advance in moderation, that the court would record a strong opinion in favour of the claims, and direct

* Mr. G. Prendergast.

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administration of the Marquis of Hastings, and the adoption of the claim by the Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India, the agent of the claimants made several abortive attempts to advance the cause of his clients, sometimes by applications to parliament,* sometimes to the Court of Directors. These afford the only additional incidents belonging to the public history of the affair. There was, indeed, a succession of private intrigues scattered over nearly twenty years, all directed to abet the designs of the indefatigable usurers upon the finances of Oude. Some of these rest on evidence which history cannot receive, and the precise means by which the claim, after repeated rejections, found favour at the Board cannot be satisfactorily traced. This was, indeed, a period when the good fortune of those who were desirous of preying upon the people of India was in the ascendant. Only two years before, a bill had been successfully passed through parliament to satisfy the ever-memorable claims of the creditor of the zemindar of Noozeed.† The next year was signalized by an application for a mandamus requiring the Court of Directors to send out a despatch to aid the demands of the firm of

* In 1822, a select committee of the House of Commons was appointed to inquire into the claims; but the committee never reported—a fact little to be regretted, as the value of the recommendations of parliamentary committees appointed to inquire into *personal* matters is too generally known to allow of their having the slightest weight in any question.

† On this subject, see note on pages 243—246, vol. ii.

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Palmer & Co. on the Nizam;* and now a similar measure was taken with regard to claims equally reputable with those which were the objects of parliamentary and ministerial favour in the previous instances. A rule in the Court of King's Bench was obtained by the attorney-general on behalf of the Board, but before the time arrived for shewing cause against it, the views of the Board had, from some motive, undergone a change, and the threatened measure was suffered to drop. The firmness manifested by the Court of Directors, without doubt, led to this result; the utter rottenness of the ground upon which their opponents stood rendering them unwilling to risk further contest with those who had a good cause and the courage to maintain it. Six† directors addressed a letter to the court, avowing their determination not to affix their signature, under any circumstances, to the objectionable despatch. The deputy chairman‡ took the same course. He remarked: "I am quite aware that I am called upon to act ministerially only in signing the despatch of the Board, but there are cases where I cannot act even ministerially. There are obligations superior to that of yielding obedience to a mandamus, and there are acts which cannot be performed without a violation of those principles on

* See vol. iv. pp. 581, 583.

† William Astell, Esq.; Campbell Marjoribanks, Esq.; William Wigram, Esq.; John Thornhill, Esq.; Charles Mills, Esq.; Russell Ellice, Esq.

‡ Henry St. George Tucker, Esq.

which all law is founded." The chairman,* though he did not refuse to sign the despatch, stated, with great force and distinctness, his utter disapproval of its object, declaring, "sooner than be responsible for this draft, I would resign my seat." "Every director," he subsequently observed, "is bound to support the Company by his best advice, counsel, and assistance. I acquit myself of that obligation, upon this occasion, by the counsel I have given, and shall continue to give, that the court should use every legal means in their power to prevent the transmission of this most objectionable despatch." Five other directors† recorded their concurrence in the views of the chairman. The patrons of the usurious creditors of the Vizier Asoph-ul-Dowlah found their determination fail at the last moment, and the Court of King's Bench were not moved to make the rule granted absolute. But the attempt to compel the Court of Directors to aid, by their authority, the unrighteous cause was too extraordinary, and had been too public to escape animadversion in parliament. Lord Ellenborough gave notice of a motion in the House of Lords on the subject; and on the 29th of April (the rule in the Court of King's Bench having previously been discharged), he inquired whether the Board intended to persevere. Earl Grey answered, that he believed it was not intended to proceed

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* John Loch, Esq.

† W. B. Bayley, Esq.; James Rivett Carnac, Esq. (now Sir James R. Carnac, Bart.); Henry Alexander, Esq.; Richard Jenkins, Esq. (now Sir Richard Jenkins, G. C. B.); Henry Shank, Esq.

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further. Lord Ellenborough, thereupon, put this further question—Upon what ground the determination of the Board had been taken? The premier naively answered, that he did not know. The Lord Chancellor* then interposed, and after a few preliminary remarks, said, "Events have taken place which have quite put an end to the matter in question, and have taken away the whole grounds of the case upon which the proceedings of the Board of Control were founded."† But his lordship did not state what those grounds were, nor what were the events which had taken them away. On the 5th of
1834. May, Lord Ellenborough submitted his notice, which was for papers connected with the subject. His lordship, in introducing it, stated his reason to be the desire of preventing a mischievous measure, the attempt to carry which, in one way, had been frustrated from being effected in another. He adverted to the miserable condition of Oude, which he alleged must have been known to the Board, and dwelt on the peculiar inexpediency of selecting such a time for pressing the claims in question. He inquired how the claims were to be pressed—whether by representation only, or whether, if necessary, resort was to be had to force; and he argued that the former course would be vain and fruitless, while the latter was forbidden alike by law and policy. After discussing at some length the origin and history of the claims, he proceeded to speak of the agent‡ of

* Lord Brougham. † Mirror of Parliament.
‡ Mr. Prendergast.

the claimants, whom he represented as more than an agent, it being generally believed—indeed, his lordship said "notorious, that he purchased the whole or part of the private claim of the party in whose name he has appeared." This purchase, he contended, was unlawful by the spirit and letter of the statute* prohibiting British subjects from being concerned in loans to native princes; "therefore," added his lordship, "I say on that ground, as well as the other first mentioned by me, that the letter forwarded by the Board of Control to the Court of Directors was an illegal letter. It was in favour of a claim which was entirely void by the English law—it was in favour of an individual who claimed by virtue of having purchased the bond, which purchase was a misdemeanour, and it directed the doing of that which could not be done without subjecting to the penalties of a misdemeanour the governor-general of India. Under these circumstances, I am not surprised that the rule for the mandamus has been discharged. I am perfectly satisfied that the Court of King's Bench could not have granted the mandamus, upon these facts being made known to the judges of that court. But more than that, I am quite convinced that when all these points should have been brought before the noble earl at the head of his Majesty's government, he would have agreed with me, that to send that letter to India was impossible; that it was most unjust and unfair to the governor-general of India to call upon him, contrary to treaty—contrary

* 37 Geo. 3, cap. 142.

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to law—contrary to equity—to use force where force was prohibited by Act of Parliament, and repugnant to the feelings, the honour, and the policy of this nation. Therefore, I do not thank the president of the Board of Control for withdrawing that letter, and not pressing for the mandamus. He could not have sent the letter or obtained the mandamus."* Lord Ellenborough then, with reference to the possible revival, in another shape, of the abandoned orders on the claim, proceeded to argue the question on grounds of general policy, and concluded by submitting his motion.

The Lord Chancellor, whose withering exposure of the "Noozeed affair," two years before, had commanded the admiration of all but such as were interested in the matter, now appeared as the champion of claims quite as questionable as those which he had formerly denounced. His lordship entered upon a vehement defence of the agent, or alleged agent, of the creditors, denying that he had purchased the claim of those whom he professed to represent, but at the same time maintaining that if he had, the purchase might have been made before the Act referred to by Lord Ellenborough came into operation, in which case it would not have been tainted with illegality. On this point the noble and learned peer was very indignant, observing, in reference to the imputation cast by Lord Ellenborough upon the agent of the claimants, and by imputation upon the president of the Board, "Happily, the venom of this attack

* Mirror of Parliament.

is accompanied by its antidote."* The Lord Chancellor then proceeded, at great length, to examine and defend the character of the claims, and, nearly at equal length, to argue that the intention of sending out the offensive despatch having been abandoned, there was no pretence for Lord Ellenborough's motion. The Duke of Wellington supported the motion, and expressed strong feelings of concern and surprise at the attempt to enforce upon the Court of Directors, by the operation of the law, the measures contemplated by the Board. Lord Plunket, the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, supported the views of the Lord Chancellor of England, and the debate was terminated by a reply from Lord Ellenborough, in the course of which he used language highly laudatory of the Court of Directors.† The motion was

* Mirror of Parliament.

† His lordship said, "There is another body of persons on whose behalf I wish to say a few words. The noble and learned lord on the woolsack did not throw any reflection on the Court of Directors, but the noble and learned lord opposite (Lord Plunket) did do so. My lords, I must say that the conduct of the Court of Directors, in this transaction, reflects great honour on them. It does not matter to them whether the recommendation of Mr. Grant be adopted or not; they are in no respect interested, except as the guardians of the honour and good faith of the administration of India: as such, acting upon their responsibility—acting in the discharge of their duty to those who elected them, and the people of India, they are determined to resist the order of Mr. Grant; in so doing they deserve well of the people of India, and of those who intrusted them with the charge which they hold. I think it a subject of great congratulation to the country that the affairs of the Company are administered by gentlemen of independence." After adverting to the resistance offered by the different members of the court, to the fact that eight members re-

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carried; but this was a point of little moment, the object of bringing it forward being to obtain a public discussion of the question.

It was not to be expected that the extraordinary proceedings of the Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India would pass without notice in that assembly, which has been termed the grand inquest
1834. of England. Accordingly, on the 8th of May, Mr. Herries, in the House of Commons, moved for some papers connected with the subject, and the motion was carried without opposition. On the 12th, Mr. Herries put two questions to the ministry—first, whether the proceedings in the Court of King's Bench had been abandoned? and, secondly, whether it was still the determination of the advisers of the Crown to employ the authority of the government of India for procuring the settlement of the claims of the bankers? The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Althorp, in the absence of the president of the Board, answered distinctly to the first, that the legal proceedings had been abandoned; to the second, he declined giving any reply. Some further papers were granted on the 15th of May, on the motion of Mr. Charles Ross, and on the 28th of July, Mr.

fused to sign the despatch, even ministerially, and that six others formally disclaimed all responsibility in regard to it, his lordship passed a high encomium on the character of the chairman, Mr. Loch, founded on official intercourse, and then asked, "Is it possible for any man to say that there can be no doubt as to the correctness of the Board of Control, when fourteen out of twenty-four directors view it in this light, and when twenty-three out of twenty-four refused their assent to it?"

Herries availed himself of an opening which occurred for bringing the matter to the notice of the House more distinctly and prominently, without the necessity of submitting any motion on the subject. After narrating, with some minuteness, the facts of the difference between the Board of Commissioners and the Court of Directors, Mr. Herries thus pointedly placed the nature of the question at issue before his auditors:—"The House will naturally ask, what has been the cause of all this? Is it some great point of Indian policy? Is it some scheme for the better management of that important part of the empire? No. It is neither more nor less than this—the settlement of an old, usurious job of forty years' standing. This it is which has induced the India Board to act as it has done." He then proceeded to examine the history of the claims in detail, and concluded by calling on the president of the Board for explanation. Mr. Grant followed, but his speech, though able and ingenious, afforded no insight into the reasons which had induced him, first to apply for the mandamus, and then to withdraw the application. He maintained the justice of the claims, and defended the demand for interest at thirty-six per cent. upon the ground that it was the market rate in India. To an allegation of Mr. Herries, that he had not met the arguments of the Court of Directors contained in their reply to the communication of the views of the Board, the answer of Mr. Grant appears very insufficient. It was to the effect that the correspondence, of which that

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letter formed part, was not between the public and the India Board, but between the Court of Directors and that Board;—that both parties had all the facts before them, and were intimately acquainted with all that had been written on the subject; and that, consequently, it was unnecessary to answer the arguments of the court, more especially as the views of the president had been made known to the chairman and deputy-chairman of the Company by personal communication. This mode of dealing with the matter would seem to justify all the apprehensions expressed by the court during the discussion on the recent renewal of the Company's term of government, as to the effect of refusing a rule of publicity in cases of irreconcilable difference between the two home authorities.*

* The explanation of the president seems to be nothing more than the old "*Sic volo sic jubeo*" somewhat dilated. To answer a logical array of facts and syllogisms by a mandamus may be very conclusive, but is not very convincing. The letter referred to was thus characterized by Mr. Herries:—"This letter contains one of the most able arguments I ever read in the whole of my life. If honourable members have not read this letter—and, being connected with an Indian subject, I fear that few have done so—I would earnestly recommend them to peruse it, for I consider it the very ablest public document which has come under my observation for many years. It omits no single point of the controversy—there is no historical reference which is not carried to its very source—no authority which has been quoted in the whole course of the dispute that is not elaborately set forth; in short, it does not leave a shred, a patch, or a shadow of an argument in the case untouched. I know not who drew up this paper, but, whoever he may be, he is an honour to the 'Court of Directors.'" The date of the letter referred to was the 1st of March, 1833, and the greater part of it will be found

Sir Robert Peel followed Mr. Grant, and placed the question on its just grounds in the simple form following:—"In point of fact, this question lies in the narrowest compass, and I wish to address myself to those gentlemen who are not conversant with the details of it, and who know nothing of the Dosses or the Asoph-ul-Dowlahs, nor have ever heard their names mentioned until this night. The question is this:—a debt was contracted by the King of Oude, forty years ago, for which he was to pay interest at the rate of thirty-six per cent.; various other debts were also contracted by the same individual. During the lapse of those forty years, different governments in India have made amicable applications to the King of Oude for the payment of this debt; but they never resorted to other measures, conceiving themselves precluded from doing so by their amicable relations with that country; and the question now is, whether, after the lapse of forty years, the peremptory authority of the Court of King's Bench shall be used, to compel a reluctant body, responsible for the government of India, to select one debt out of an indefinite number for the purpose of enforcing its liquidation." In answer to an argument, employed by the president of the Board, that a wrong had been done to a British subject, and that we were at liberty to redress the wrong, Sir Robert Peel said, "The whole force of the argument depends upon the fallacy of confounding the

in the Appendix to vol. v. of this work, extending from page 424 to 445.

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non-payment of a debt with a wrong. When did ever the United States construe the non-payment of a debt into a wrong? If any subject of the Crown receive an injury from a foreign state, you have a right to apply for redress, and, if refused, to compel it; but it is a perfectly novel doctrine, and, in the present state of the world, most inconvenient, that the non-payment of a debt due to his subjects gives a right to the King of England forcibly to interfere with foreign states. Oh! how delighted will the creditors of Spain be, when they hear this doctrine! Why, the bonds of the Cacique of Poyais even, will be established and raised to a premium, when it is known that the right honourable gentleman has declared that the non-payment of a debt, due to a British subject by a foreign state, is a public wrong, and gives the King the right to interfere with force to compel its payment."* Mr. Grant had said that he did not intend, or contemplate, the employment of force, and to this Sir Robert Peel answered that the Court of Directors understood that the use of force was intended; that such, indeed, was the only construction that could properly be put upon a particular direction in the meditated despatch; and that the president, though aware that the direction was so understood by the court, made no attempt to shew that it was unwarranted. After many further remarks, illustrating the impolicy of taking up the claim of the bankers, Sir Robert Peel concluded by referring to the possi-

* Mirror of Parliament.

ble assumption of the government of Oude by the British, and solemnly deprecated, in that case, the commencement of the exercise of sovereignty, by appropriating eleven hundred thousand pounds sterling of the property of the territory to the liquidation of a claim, for which it did not appear that the British State had ever made itself in the slightest degree responsible. Only one speaker more addressed the House, Mr. Hume, who defended the claim of the bankers, alleging that it was a peculiar case, inasmuch as theirs was the only debt remaining due to a British subject.* He maintained that the debt was just; that the illustrations adduced by Sir Robert Peel were not apposite; and that it was disgraceful to the British government that the claim should have been permitted to remain so long unsettled. But, while agreeing in the views propounded by the president of the Board, Mr. Hume passed a censure upon that minister. "The right honourable gentleman," he said, "has taken no step to enforce the payment of that which he has this night so ably proved to be a just debt; for if, in his opinion, it be not a just debt, then it was an act of great weakness to have proceeded so far as he has done. But, persuaded as I am that the debt is a just one, I think he ought not to have been pre-

* This does not appear to be correct. It is stated in a report of the Committee of Correspondence of the Court of Directors, dated the 31st May, 1822, and printed in the parliamentary papers, that Mr. Bruce, an European creditor, having rejected the composition accepted by his fellow-claimants, "lost his whole debt, amounting to Rs. 450,000."

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vented from following up those proceedings, until the parties had had full justice done to them."*

Thus ended the debate, and here terminated an affair in which, happily, moral strength was successful in resisting an undue exercise of legal power.†

The course of the home government of India was not, however, destined long to run smoothly. In
1834. the month of August, a letter was received by the chairman of the East-India Company from Lord William Bentinck, tendering his lordship's resignation of the office of governor-general. Sir Charles Metcalfe,‡ a highly distinguished civil servant of the

* This quotation is made from the report contained in the "Mirror of Parliament," on which accurate authority the preceding notice of some of the parts of Mr. Hume's speech also rests. In another highly trustworthy work, "Hansard's Parliamentary Debates," the following is given as part of the proceedings of the House of Commons of the 4th July, 1822, when Mr. Brougham moved that a petition on this claim should be referred to a committee.—"Mr. Hume, instead of looking upon this as a matter fit for public inquiry, thought it a private subject. Lord Cornwallis had declared that the government ought not to interfere with matters of private debt in India, and if the Marquess Wellesley considered the present subject fit for public interference, he had had abundant opportunities of promoting inquiry into the transaction. If the House tolerated an inquiry into this case, they would, next session, have five thousand applications of a similar nature."

† A very able pamphlet on the subject, in the form of a letter to Mr. Grant, appeared from the pen of Eneas MacDonnel, Esq. It will repay the perusal of those who take an interest in Indian affairs, by its clear exposition of facts, and the biting comments made on them.

‡ It will be recollected, that he was selected to succeed Sir David Ochterlony in the management of the British relations with Bhurtpore. See vol. v., p. 134, et seq.

Company, had been appointed to be the provisional successor of Lord William Bentinck; and, on taking into consideration the communication of his lordship's wish to retire, the Court of Directors came to a resolution that, "adverting to the public character and services of Sir Charles Metcalfe, whose knowledge, experience, and talents, eminently qualify him to prosecute successfully the various important measures consequent on the new Charter Act, this Court are of opinion that it would be inexpedient at present to make any other arrangement for supplying the office of governor-general." This resolution having been communicated to Mr. Grant, drew from that gentleman an answer, announcing the decided opinion of the King's ministers, that no time should be lost in appointing a permanent successor to the retiring governor-general; and intimating further, that with respect to the appointment of any servant of the Company, "however eminent his knowledge, talents, and experience" might "confessedly be," the ministry agreed in the sentiments which Mr. Canning had, on a former occasion, expressed, "that the case can hardly be conceived in which it would be expedient that the *highest* office of the government in India should be filled otherwise than from England; and that that one main link, at least, between the systems of the Indian and British governments ought, for the advantage of both, to be invariably maintained. On this principle," it was added, "it has usually been thought proper to act, and in the various important measures consequent on the new Char-

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ter Act, his Majesty's ministers see much to enjoin the continuance of the general practice, but nothing to recommend a deviation from it."*

After this intimation, the Court of Directors abstained from pressing the claims of Sir Charles

* As neither the affirmative nor the negative part of the ministerial vision is expounded, it is impossible to argue that peculiar part of the question at issue which relates to the operation of the Act then recently passed, and which is referred to as "the new Charter Act." The general question having been discussed in vol. iv. pp. 96-117, it is not necessary to re-open it in this place, but it is certainly not easy to understand upon what principles the *dictum* of Mr. Canning, held fatal to the claims of Sir C. Metcalfe, was based. He held that the highest office in the government of India should invariably be filled from England. As it never was proposed to confer it upon any other than an Englishman born, this declaration must be understood to amount, in fact, to an announcement of the opinion of Mr. Canning, that the office of governor-general should not be filled by a servant of the Company; that elegant rhetorician having, probably from a feeling of courtesy, left this to be inferred in preference to stating it directly. The apparent result, therefore, is this: that if, in addition to the other requisite qualifications for the office of governor-general, a candidate happen to possess local knowledge and experience, these fatal acquisitions shall operate as a bar to his claim. What is said of maintaining one main link at least between the two countries is obviously mere *verbiage*, for as all the holders of high office are natives of the British islands, and the governor-general would under any circumstances be a native of one of them, there must always be links enough to constitute a tolerably weighty chain. It will be recollected that the chief argument used in 1807 against the Company's servants was, that the governor-general should be a man of rank and family. Mr. Canning, however, who subsequently laid down the broad rule of exclusion quoted by the Board in 1834, himself aspired to the office of governor-general, and his talents and reputation justified him in so aspiring—but it must not be forgotten that he wanted that qualification which, in 1807, was declared to be essential. Mr. Canning was not a man of

Metcalfe; but they did not suffer the objection to his appointment to remain unanswered. A letter was addressed by the court to Mr. Grant, in answer to his communication, in which letter, after expressing their concurrence in the opinion of the King's ministers that a permanent appointment was to be preferred to a temporary one, and their conviction

rank and family. His father was in the position of a gentleman, but his family was not among those of the nobles of the land; the mother of Mr. Canning was an actress, the wife in succession of three husbands, one of whom was an actor, another a provincial tradesman. Upon what, then, did Mr. Canning's claim rest? Upon a brilliant school and college education, followed by the exhibition of showy literary talent, and of extraordinary powers as a parliamentary speaker. He was a scholar, a wit, an orator, and—for this seems the most important point of all—he had never been in India. At the period of his entrance into public life, Mr. Canning's fortune was extremely small; and if, instead of seeking to improve it by official employment at home, he had pursued the same end in the service of the East-India Company, a ban of prohibition would have stood between him and the first place in the government of India. The moral of the whole appears to be this; that with regard to qualifications for service in India, the reverse of what is held to apply to Europe forms the just rule. An aspirant to the premiership would not be thought the worse qualified for having spent twenty years or more in offices of inferior importance, having passed through gradations involving various and continually increasing measures of responsibility. But with regard to the governor-general of India it is different. A candidate may prepare himself, as he may prefer, either by embarking in the struggles of faction, or by gliding through the enticing circle of enjoyments which fashionable life presents; but he must not have too much knowledge of the country which he is to govern. If he possess the advantage of rank, the latter more calm course, of study, may be sufficient. If, like Mr. Canning, he want this advantage, the display of zeal and ability as a political partizan seems indispensable; but service in India disqualifies utterly, hopelessly, and irrevocably.

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that Sir Charles Metcalfe was a fit person to have been permanently appointed, the Court thus dealt with the general question: "The Court of Directors have learnt with deep regret that Sir Charles Metcalfe is considered by his Majesty's government to be ineligible to the station of governor-general,* and upon grounds which would exclude the whole service of India from that high office. The Court of Directors feel little disposed to engage in discussing the merits of an opinion which his Majesty's ministers appear to have adopted upon the authority of Mr. Canning. They will only observe, that the whole course of our transactions in British India may be referred to, as furnishing the most conclusive evidence that the servants of the Company, both civil and military, are eminently qualified for the highest public trust, and that the important office of governor-general has been held by several of them with the utmost advantage to the national interests. The court will not unnecessarily recall to the recollection of his Majesty's ministers those names which have rendered the service of India illustrious —that service to whose merits, to whose talents and high tone of character, the late Mr. Canning has

* It is not the least remarkable of the remarkable circumstances of this case, that Sir Charles Metcalfe, who was deemed ineligible for office in India, was, by the ministry which rejected him, and by their successors who passed him over, deemed eligible for the appointment of governor of two distant colonial possessions, neither of which he had ever seen till he went to administer the government. For India, where he had many years of experience, he was ineligible—for Jamaica and Canada, where he had none, he was eligible.

himself borne the most unqualified testimony. But the court cannot refrain from observing, that, independently of the impolicy of putting forth any general declaration of ineligibility, his Majesty's ministers appear to them to be scarcely justified in proposing to narrow the choice of the court, by excluding any class of men, possessing the necessary qualifications, from the office of governor-general."

After expressing the desire of the court to act in concurrence with the advisers of the Crown, it was intimated that the expediency of making an arrangement for filling up the office of governor-general would be taken into consideration at the proper time—for it is to be observed, that, though Lord William Bentinck had tendered his resignation, such tender did not, in the eye of the law, amount to an actual resignation of office.* The president of the Board, however, appears to have taken a different view, and to have informed the chairman and deputy-chairman that, in consequence of the proposal of the court to continue Sir Charles Metcalfe, the ministry did not hold themselves bound to refrain from making an appointment under the provisions of the law; according to which, the right lapsed to the Crown after a delay of two months from the notification of a vacancy. The opinion of counsel was taken on the question, and that opinion being

* Departure from India with intent to return to Europe is tantamount to a resignation. Resignation in India must be by a declaration in writing under hand and seal, delivered to the secretary in the public department, for the purpose of being recorded.

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favourable to the court, the president of the Board intimated that the power of the Crown would not be exercised to appoint, without giving a month's notice to the Court of Directors. This was certainly no great or generous concession, seeing that by law they were entitled to two months.

D. 1834. The intimation was given in October, 1834, and
D. 1835. thus the matter rested till January, 1835,* by which time, the ministerial revolution, occasioned by the death of Earl Spencer, and the consequent elevation of his son, Lord Althorpe, to the House of Peers, had introduced a new cabinet and new counsels. The former was framed from the party who had been excluded by the accession of the Whigs, and Sir

* The ministers being anxious for the appointment of a successor to Lord William Bentinck, it may seem inexplicable that the subject should have been suffered to sleep; but it is understood that they were desirous of the appointment of Mr. Grant to the office, and that the authorities of the Company were opposed thereto. This does not appear in any authorized shape, but the fact was publicly stated at a general court, on the 15th of July, 1835, and not denied. Here is a fresh illustration of the extraordinary operation of the principle maintained by Mr. Canning and his followers. Mr. Grant was a man of talent, and he possessed much information relating to India: thus far, upon the principles of common sense, he was eligible for the office of governor-general; but further, he had never been in India, and, upon the principle of Mr. Canning, this made him more eligible. The father of Mr. Grant, like his son, was a man of talent—this is well—his knowledge of India was greater, more minute, and more accurate than could be that of his son: this would seem to add to his qualifications, but not so—the very circumstance which, more than any other, conduced to the extent, accuracy, and precision of his knowledge, put him out of the pale of appointment; he had acquired his information in India, and he would, therefore, have been ineligible.

Robert Peel, for the first time, held the chief place in it. The difficulty which had previously impeded the choice of a governor-general no longer existing, the Court of Directors proceeded to exercise the power of appointment. Their choice fell upon Lord Heytesbury, whose appointment was immediately approved by the Crown. Sir Charles Metcalfe was again selected provisionally to succeed on any vacancy that might occur by the death, resignation, or departure of the new governor-general. Lord Heytesbury was sworn into office, and, to all appearance, the duty of appointing a successor was not likely again to be called into exercise until the completion by his lordship of the ordinary period of service. But so far from completing that period, Lord Heytesbury never commenced it. He took the oath of office, and this was the last, as well as the first, of his official acts. The ministry, under which his appointment had been sanctioned, possessed the confidence of the Crown, but failed in obtaining that of the House of Commons. A dissolution had been resorted to, but the first division which took place in the new parliament left the ministers in a minority, and, after a brief endeavour to stem the tide of opposition, they retired, making way for the return of those whom they had but a few months before displaced. Mr. Grant did not return to the office of president of the Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India, but became Secretary of State for the Colonial Department, his place at the Board being assigned to Sir John Hobhouse. The prepara-

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tions of Lord Heytesbury for his departure were complete; but no sooner was the Whig ministry again in office, than he received an intimation of the wish of government that he should postpone it. This, after the expiration of three days, was followed by a communication to his lordship of the intention of ministers to advise his Majesty to revoke the appointment. A confidential communication of this intention had been previously made by the president of the Board to the chairman and deputy-chairman of the Company, and on its being carried into effect, it was formally announced in a letter from the president, in which he further stated that ministers did not intend to recommend the approval of any successor to Lord William Bentinck till that nobleman should have arrived in England, but that no advantage would be taken of the delay to exercise the prerogative of the Crown, to the prejudice of the right of the Court of Directors. The court, however, were by no means satisfied with the course that had been adopted, the effect of which was, to render the office of governor-general one of the prizes of party conflict; to connect the government of India with the parliamentary struggles of the United Kingdom, and to sacrifice the interests of the former country to the alternate gratification of rival factions in the latter. They consequently remonstrated against the step which had been taken. After adverting to the circumstances of Lord Heytesbury's appointment, they pointed out the difference between the mode in

which the royal prerogative had in this case been exercised, and that followed on the only previous occasion in which the like course had been resorted to—that of the supersession of Sir George Barlow in 1806. In that case, it was observed, there was a previous interchange of sentiments between the King's ministers and the court; and the act of revocation was accompanied by an explanation of the grounds upon which it had been advised, and would be justified; while in the instance under examination, no previous communication had been made to the court, no opportunity was afforded them to state their objections to the measure, nor had a single reason been assigned in its justification.* The discrepancy of the views of the ministry, as to the expediency of postponing a permanent appointment, with those which they entertained a few months before, when they deemed an immediate appointment indispensable, was pointed out, and, in the last place, the court thus dwelt upon the danger with which the act of the ministry was fraught to India, and the independence of its government:—"The court do not forget that the nomination of Lord Heytesbury was made and his appointment completed during the late administration. But this fact, connected with his removal by the present ministers, fills the court with apprehension and

* Sir John Hobhouse had intimated the course about to be taken to the chairman and deputy-chairman; but the communication was, as already observed, confidential, and moreover, it was made only the day preceding that on which the president wrote to Lord Heytesbury, requesting him to defer his departure.

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alarm, as respects both India and themselves. It has always been the court's endeavour in their public acts, and especially in their nominations to office, to divest themselves of political bias; and in the same spirit they now consider it to be their duty frankly and firmly to express their decided conviction that the vital interests of India will be sacrificed if the appointments of governors are made subservient to political objects in this country; and if the local authorities, and, through them, all public servants, are led to feel that tenure of office abroad is dependent upon the duration of an administration at home; and, further, that the revocation of an appointment, such as that of Lord Heytesbury, for no other reason, so far as the court can judge, than that the ministry has changed, must have the effect of lessening the authority of the court, and consequently impairing its usefulness and efficiency as a body intrusted with the government of India."* It is scarcely necessary to observe, that the remonstrance produced no effect, and certainly none was expected. It was not in the hope of shaking the decision of the ministry that the remonstrance was transmitted by the court; it was designed to vindicate their own conduct and position, and to place on record a protest against an act which, though undoubtedly within the letter of the law, was not less undoubtedly at variance with its spirit and intention.

To ascertain, beyond the possibility of dispute, the

* Letter of chairman and deputy-chairman, 6th May, 1835.

precise extent of the pledge given to refrain from the exercise of the royal prerogative to appoint a governor-general, should the right lapse by the delay of the court—which delay was not their own act, but was virtually imposed on them—another letter was addressed to the president, in which it was assumed to be the intention of the ministry to consider the two months allowed to the directors by law for making an appointment as commencing from the arrival of Lord William Bentinck in England. The answer of the president disclaimed this interpretation, but, at the same time, intimated that he was ready to give to the pledge the more extended sense, and to construe it in the way most agreeable to the Court of Directors. Indeed, if the conduct and language of Sir John Hobhouse throughout this transaction be considered apart from the act of which he was either the mover or the instrument of carrying into effect, it must in justice be regarded as courteous, conciliatory, and liberal.

The arrangement by which the choice of a governor-general was to be postponed till the arrival of Lord William Bentinck was discussed by some directors, and a dissent from it was recorded by Mr. Lyall. The chief ground of his objection was, that before the arrival of his lordship, the period during which the court could claim of right to fill up the vacancy would have expired; that, consequently, they would forfeit not only the right of appointment,

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but the far more important power of recall.* He admitted that the pledge of the president of the Board was satisfactory, so far as himself and his colleagues were concerned, but he apprehended that it would not be obligatory on a succeeding administration, should another change take place before the vacancy were supplied. But, independently of this danger, he objected to the principle of permitting so valuable and important a trust as that of appointing the governor-general of India to pass from the keeping of the court voluntarily, without corresponding advantage, and upon grounds slight and inadequate. "If," he continued, "his Majesty's ministers are impressed with an idea that any party or political feelings would prevent the court's acquiescence in the appointment of a fit and proper person for that high station, I sincerely believe such an impression to be quite unfounded. I feel assured that the court, without regard to any party, are only desirous that a person should be selected, whose character and qualifications shall fit him for an office which may be considered, perhaps, the most important in the empire, not only in regard to British interests, but more particularly as affecting the well-being and prosperity of a hundred millions of our fellow-creatures, whom the inscrutable wisdom of a Divine Providence has, in regions so remote, placed under our protection, and subjected to our rule.

* The court are precluded by law from recalling an officer appointed by the Crown.

Deeply sensible, therefore, of the important trust committed to our charge, I feel it to be our bounden duty to maintain inviolate those powers which are conferred upon the court for public objects, and of which, if we silently suffer the efficiency to be impaired, we shall be lending ourselves to measures of which our constituents, parliament, and the public at large may justly complain."* Sir Richard Jenkins recorded his general concurrence in the views of Mr. Lyall. Mr. Tucker, who had held the office of chairman at the time of Lord Heytesbury's appointment, subsequently addressed a letter to the court, in which he defended the character of Lord Heytesbury, and justified his own conduct, with regard to the choice of that nobleman for office. He referred to the diplomatic services of his lordship, and to the sense entertained of them, not only by those agreeing with him in political sentiments, but also by some of the leading members of the party of the Whigs. He shewed that Lord Heytesbury had been continued in the office of ambassador in Russia by his political opponents; that it was at his own express desire, made in consequence of the failure of his health, that he was permitted to retire; and that he then received from Lord Palmerston, the Secretary for the Foreign Department in the ministry by whom his lordship was now displaced, a most flattering testimony to his merits and services. But the case of the individual, Mr. Tucker observed, was of minor consideration; the public principle involved

* Dissent of George Lyall, Esq., 17th June, 1835.

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was the chief point at issue. "An open attempt," he remarked, "has been made to cancel an unobjectionable appointment, for mere party purposes. By rendering the governors of India the mere dependent nominees of the ministry holding office during pleasure, the administration of the day will acquire a power and influence which will enable it to assume and dispense the local patronage of India clandestinely, without responsibility, and (when bad men bear sway) for corrupt purposes, for the purpose of obtaining political power in this country, in utter contempt of the provisions of the legislature, both as they relate to Indian patronage, and to the objects of those more recent enactments which profess to secure purity of parliament.

"And what will be the situation of the governor who holds under this precarious tenure? Will he command the same authority and influence abroad? Certainly not. Will he be able to govern and keep in order that large and mixed community, among whom are found so many elements of discord? I fear not. Will he not be regarded as the mere pageant of the administration at home? as the servile instrument of dispensing its patronage? Will any man of honour, of high spirit, of independent principles and independent fortune, be found to accept the office, and to embark for a distant country, when liable to be superseded, upon considerations of political conveniency, on any of those changes of administration which have been so frequent of late years? No doubt the station will still

be the object of desire to the mercenary and ambitious; but not to those eminent and disinterested men, who alone ought to be selected for so great a national trust. And what will be the consequence of this attempt to introduce the distinctions of party into India? What will be its effect upon the public servants, the European community, and the native population, which is rapidly acquiring European notions and habits? Our servants, much to their honour, have hitherto looked to distinction and promotion as the reward of merit and useful service. They have known no party. They were actuated by an ardent desire to promote the public interests, well assured that their political opinions would never be questioned or thought of. They acted together with perfect cordiality, to promote one great end, the public good, without reference to political principles or party connections in this country. India was of no party, and the Court of Directors were considered to be perfectly independent of all political influence.

"But we are now to introduce the badges of party into India! The European community is to be broken into those factions which so often agitate the public mind in this country, which so often breed discord and disturbance, and cause public principle, the public interests, and the feelings of patriotism to be sacrificed to party objects. That union which has hitherto constituted our main strength and superiority in India will be at an end; and our native subjects will learn to place

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confidence in their own numbers and resources, as they perceive the foundations of our power to be shaken. Promotion in the service will be sought as the reward of political subserviency, and distinction and office will be bestowed to purchase the base and sordid services of political partisans in England. That high and independent tone of character which has hitherto distinguished our service will degenerate into selfishness; while the business of managing adverse parties will be superadded to the multitudinous and arduous duties which already bear so heavily on our governors, and which seem almost to transcend the ordinary powers of man. Greatly must the difficulties of the situation be aggravated by the want of permanency in the tenure—by the want of confidence on the part of the public—by the diminution of that influence which independence usually bestows; and serious will be the injury to the public service if the high functionaries of India, feeling that their situations are held only from day to day, should be discouraged from undertaking those extended works of improvement which require time and persevering labour to bring them to maturity."* In conclusion, Mr. Tucker defended himself from what he regarded as a charge of having compromised the rights of the Court of Directors as to the appointment to the office of governor-general, by permitting the prescribed period of two months to elapse.

* Letter from H. St. G. Tucker, Esq., to the Court of Directors, 9th July, 1835.

On the 29th June, the attention of the House of Commons was called to the question by Mr. Praed, who, on the motion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the order of the day for the committee of supply be read, moved an amendment calling for the production of any communications that had passed between the Board and the court on the subject of the revocation of the appointment of Lord Heytesbury. After narrating the circumstances of the case, the mover of the amendment inquired, whether there were any reasons for the objection made to Lord Heytesbury—whether the president of the Board would say that he did not consider the government of India would be safe in the hands of Lord Heytesbury—whether he thought that the commands of the government, here, would not be obeyed by the noble lord in India. He adverted to his lordship's diplomatic services, and to the approbation which they had received from the government; he argued that the power by which the appointment had been annulled was not a matter of pure prerogative, but was given by statute, and that the obvious purpose of the law under which it was exercised, and the avowed intentions of its framers, proved that it was not designed to apply to such a case as that under consideration. He referred to the famous contest, on Indian affairs, between the two great political parties, which terminated in the triumph of Mr. Pitt and the passing of the Act of 1784. "The House," he observed, "is familiar with the cir-

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cumstances under which that Act was passed. The great difference between the bill of Mr. Pitt and that which had been previously introduced by Mr. Fox was this—that the latter went to vest the whole patronage of India directly in commissioners, while the former placed it in the hands of the directors, subject, however, to the control of the Crown exercised by the Board of Control, in cases where any abuse might exist. If a mere change of ministers in this country were to justify a change in the government of India, how absurd was it to leave to the Court of Directors, a body separate from and independent of ministers, a concurrent share in the choice of the person by whom the government of India should be administered. The Act of Mr. Pitt, which gave to the Company a concurrent share in the choice, could not possibly contemplate a change of the person chosen for reasons in which the Company had no concern." In illustration of the spirit and object of the arrangement of 1784, Mr. Praed quoted the following explanation, by Mr. Pitt, of the powers of the Board. "The principal powers of the Board would consist in directing what political objects the Company's servants were to pursue, and in recalling such as did not pay obedience to such directions, or give satisfactory reasons to shew that circumstances rendered disobedience a virtue." "This, then," continued Mr. Praed, "was the power of revocation possessed by the Crown. It was to be exercised only in case of disobedience of orders, or for gross abuse; and this power was continued to

the Crown, as was also the patronage of the directors continued to them, by the Act of 1833. If it were desirable that the extraordinary power thus vested in the Crown should be sparingly exercised under the Act of 1784, much more desirable was it under the Act of 1833; for under the Act of 1784 the Company existed as a trading company; under that of 1833, as a political body only. How unwise is it to interfere thus arbitrarily with the government of India by the Company, just when we have determined to maintain the existence of the Company solely for the sake of its utility in the government of India." Mr. Praed then referred to the supposed precedent afforded by the case of Sir George Barlow, which he maintained was in fact no precedent, the circumstances being different. He pointed out that when the appointment of Sir George Barlow had been approved, it was upon the understanding that it was to be temporary, and, further, that it was the same government which had sanctioned the appointment which caused it to be revoked. "The appointment," said the honourable member, "might have been judicious or hasty—the revocation might have been proper or unwise; but, at all events, since the appointment and the revocation proceeded from the same ministers, there was in that case no such attempt as has been made in this, to make the continuance of a governor-general in his station dependent upon the continuance in power of the political party by which he was placed there." An irregular suggestion having been offered

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across the House, to the effect that Lord Heytesbury, not having actually assumed the government, was not "in his station," Mr. Praed proceeded thus to combat it:—"The appointment was complete by the Company—the approval was complete by the Crown—the forms had all been gone through—the expense had all been incurred.* If the mere want of political sympathy with Lord Heytesbury makes him unfit to hold the government of India during your administration, it would have warranted you in recalling him from Calcutta; if it do not make him so unfit, it does not warrant you in preventing him from proceeding thither." He then reminded the House that the power of revocation by the Crown was not limited to the office of governor-general—that it extended to all subordinate officers; and that while it was exercised with regard to the occupant of the highest office under the Company to-day, it might to-morrow be employed for the removal of the most humble of their servants. After referring to the injury likely to result from the course taken by ministers, to the just influence of the Company in India, and its efficiency as an instrument for governing that country, he quoted the remarks of various members of both Houses of Parliament, all belonging to the political party opposed to Lord Heytesbury, but all maintaining the impor-

* A sum proportioned to the high station of the office is paid to an outgoing governor-general for outfit. This had been received and expended—the purpose of its expenditure being frustrated, the money was consequently lost.

tance of upholding the Company on the ground of its freedom from party feeling.*

After some personal remarks, to which it is unnecessary more particularly to refer, Mr. Praed thus

* The first quotation was from a speech of Mr. Charles Grant, during the discussion of 1833, in which he said, "But there is another most important consideration in connection with the renewal of the charter. By the interposition of the Company between the government and the people of India, the latter are prevented from being exposed to all those continued vicissitudes of political feelings and parties to which they must have been subject had they been under the direct dominion of the Crown of England. Had this been the case, I cannot help feeling that the state of political excitement which would be occasioned would have led to disastrous consequences, that mischiefs of all kinds would have ensued, and would have formed an insurmountable barrier to the advance and improvement of the people. I cannot conceive any thing more disadvantageous to the people than their being made the sport of party passions and political feelings which take place in this country."

Mr. Praed's second quotation was from a speech made also in the year 1833, by the Marquis of Lansdowne, who acknowledged the advantages that had "resulted from the administration of the Company in keeping the interests of India excluded in a greater degree than they otherwise could have been from the several chances and changes of party in this country, and as an intervening body in the possession of patronage which would otherwise be scrambled for by the gladiators of parliament."

The third and last quotation was from a speech of Mr. Macaulay, delivered in the same year with those previously quoted. It was as follows:—"Sir, what we want is a body independent of the Crown, and no more than independent: which shall be neither the tool of the ministry nor of the Opposition. It is not easy in a country like this to constitute such a body; none I have heard suggested would be such a body; the East-India Company, strange as its constitution may appear, is such a body. Whatever charges may be brought against it, whether it does act rightly or wrongly, it does not act from political considerations."

AP. IX. concluded:—"When public servants are sent to India, it is next to impossible, from the nature of their education and their habits, for them to judge of questions concerning the Indian government except upon local information. It is, therefore, the duty of a government to send out the most unprejudiced men, and not to add to the ignorance of the stranger the zeal of the partisan. On the same principle ought the House of Commons to act in passing their judgment upon official appointments to the government of India, or otherwise it will adopt a course which by general admission must be most detrimental to the public interests."

Sir John Hobhouse, as might be expected from his official position, took the lead in defending the conduct of the ministry in superseding Lord Heytesbury: and after declaring his intention to refuse the papers moved for, making some remarks, according to the practice of all ministers on such occasions, on the inconvenience of producing papers, and quoting the authority of Lord Grenville on the subject, proceeded to state the ground on which the cabinet had acted; that ground being, that Lord Heytesbury did not possess their confidence. "The King's government," said the right honourable baronet, "had to consider whether it would be answerable for Lord Heytesbury's government in India or not; and, not wishing to be answerable for it, the course it had to take was simple and obvious. I repeat then, that not only were we justified in vacating his appointment, but we were called upon by the constitution

to do so; for it is one of the first principles of the constitution, that there shall in all cases be responsible advisers for every act done. This is the real cause of Lord Heytesbury's not going to India." Proceeding to assert the right of the Crown to recall, or cancel an appointment, he again referred to the authority of Lord Grenville, and quoting a declaration of that nobleman, that it was always intended by the Act of 1784, that his Majesty's ministers should have the power of recall at discretion, he asked, "Now, if the honourable member admits this—if he do not mean to dispute that his Majesty's ministers have the power to recall at their own discretion—what just cause of complaint has he to make, because they now, at their discretion, have ventured upon the exercise of it?" Sir John Hobhouse noticed, as an unpropitious sign for the mover of the amendment, that he met with no sympathy from those connected with India and interested in its welfare; more especially, the proprietors of East-India stock.* He admitted that what had been done might operate inconveniently with regard to the authority of the Company; but he maintained that it would be a far worse result that the feeling of cordiality, so necessary to be supported, between the head of the Indian government and the cabinet at home should be destroyed. He

* The subject had not at that time been brought before the proprietors; but at a general court held a short time afterwards, a motion was made, and ultimately carried by the ballot, for the production of the papers which had been refused by ministers in parliament.

APP. IX. quoted an opinion of one of the directors of the East-India Company, to the effect that the governor-general of India had always been a political character of distinction connected with the government at home, and that he must possess the confidence of the national government.* After some remarks on the personal topics introduced by Mr. Praed, Sir John Hobhouse passed to the allegation that no correspondence had taken place between the Board and the court on this occasion, in which respect the case varied from that of Sir George Barlow. The answer of the president of the Board was, that such correspondence was unnecessary, inasmuch as it was indisputable that Lord Heytesbury had not the confidence of his Majesty's ministers, and it was quite impossible for the court to convince them that he possessed it, and he added: "To delegate high and important duties to men not politically or personally attached to us would be on the part of ministers a feebleness, not only foolish, but fatal. For after having yielded in the outset of the contest to a difficulty of our own creating, and which a due regard

* The director alluded to was Henry St. George Tucker, Esq., who, in a letter which he subsequently addressed to the Court of Directors (part of which is quoted in pp. 36—38), vindicated himself from what he conceived an injurious charge. The passage in Sir John Hobhouse's speech was quoted by Mr. Tucker from the report of a daily newspaper, and does not precisely correspond with what is stated in the text, which is founded on the report in the "Mirror of Parliament." The words of Mr. Tucker, as quoted by himself from papers recorded by him, vary slightly from the report of the "Mirror of Parliament," but very materially from that of the newspaper.

to our honour and interest told us that we ought, at whatever risk, to incur, we should have dropped from concession to concession, till at last losing every remnant, not only of power, but of character, we should have fallen, and deservedly fallen, covered with the bitter scorn of our enemies and the contemptuous pity of our friends." In conclusion, the president repeated the expression of his determination to withhold the papers.

Mr. Hogg* replied to the arguments of Sir John Hobhouse, and referred to the circumstances under which, in 1784, the power of vacating the office of governor-general had been vested in the Crown, as proving that this power was never meant to be exercised but in cases of gross misconduct; that it was never designed to be employed for party purposes. He referred to the case of Lord Minto, appointed under a Whig administration, and permitted by a Tory one to retain his office unmolested; and to the still stronger case of Lord William Bentinck, who, having been appointed under the administration of Mr. Canning, was allowed to retain his appointment by two successive premiers—Lord Goderich and the Duke of Wellington—although, like Lord Heytesbury, he had not embarked for India, and although, with regard to the latter of the two administrations, that of the Duke of Wellington, Lord William Bentinck enjoyed its confidence

* It may be proper to notice that Mr. Hogg, now a director of the East-India Company, was not so at the time of this debate.

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to no greater extent than did Lord Heytesbury that of the cabinet of Lord Melbourne. He concluded with an emphatic warning, well deserving of being quoted and remembered. He said, "I shall beg the attention of the House for a few minutes to the consequences in India of making the governor-general a political appointment. Having resided in Calcutta for seventeen years in a situation wholly unconnected with the service,* I may be permitted to bear testimony to the merits of that service; and I will venture to assert, that in no country was there ever a body of public servants more distinguished for talent, intelligence, integrity, and a high sense of honour, than the civil and military servants of the East-India Company. To what, Sir, do I attribute the great efficiency of that service? mainly to this—that in India patronage has hitherto been purely and justly distributed, free from all personal and political influence. Men have been appointed to public offices from their standing, experience, and fitness, without reference to politics; and you have, therefore, had able and distinguished public servants in India. What, Sir, must be the consequence, if the appointment be considered a political one; if a Whig government must have a Whig governor-general, and a Tory government a Tory governor-general? The person so named will carry with him to India his political

* Mr. Hogg held an office of high trust in the Supreme Court, an establishment with which neither the Court of Directors nor the local government have any connection.

feelings and bias, and will there distribute his patronage for electioneering and political purposes, without reference to the merits of the individuals; and the public interests will thus be sacrificed and ruined."

Sir Robert Peel took the same side, and with reference to the admission that, if Lord Heytesbury had been in India, the new administration would not have recalled him, he justly inquired, "Why not? If a want of confidence in Lord Heytesbury, grounded on differences of political opinion, justifies the revocation of the noble lord's appointment, would it not also justify his removal from the government of India, supposing he had assumed it?" The material for debate had, however, been so completely exhausted by preceding speakers, that neither Sir Robert Peel nor the ministerial leader, Lord John Russell, by whom he was followed, could do more than pass again over the trodden ground, and endeavour, by some additional illustration, to give an appearance of novelty to old views and arguments. Besides the members already mentioned, Mr. Sydney Herbert and Mr. Cressett Pelham spoke against the ministers; and Mr. Cutlar Fergusson (who had just relinquished the office of an East-India director for a ministerial appointment), Mr. Silk Buckingham, and Mr. Vernon Smith, in their favour. On a division, the motion for the production of the papers was lost.

The question which formed the subject of debate

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has been so fully discussed in a former place,* that it must be unnecessary to add any thing here to the ample references which have been made to the arguments employed by the controversialists, both in and out of parliament. The revocation of the appointment of Lord Heytesbury was an act of similar character to that by which the appointment of Sir George Barlow was annulled, but the impropriety was of a more aggravated nature. It was one of the strongest instances on record, in which a power was exercised within the strict limits of the law, but in a manner altogether at variance with its spirit. It was one of those acts by which a political party loses far more in character than it can possibly gain in any other way.

Lord William Bentinck, whose approaching retirement had led to the disputes and discussions which have been narrated, quitted India, as already notified, early in 1835, and Sir Charles Metcalfe succeeded, by virtue of his provisional appointment, to the chief seat in council. His administration was short, and was distinguished by little deserving of especial record. It will chiefly be remembered by one act, which can scarcely fail to have a powerful effect, either for good or for evil, upon the interests of India, and of the British government in that country. This act was the removal of the restrictions to which the public press in India was previously subjected. For a long period preceding the

* Vol. iv. p. 96.

year 1818, the press had been subject to a censorship, a measure first resorted to during the war with France, with a view of preventing the emissaries of the enemy in India conveying intelligence derived from the newspapers published there to the French cruizers in the Indian seas. The Marquis of Hastings was induced to introduce a different system—partly, it may be presumed, by the influence of one of his ruling passions, the love of popularity, but partly, also, by another motive. The editors of newspapers were generally Europeans, and disobedience to the orders of the censurate was liable to be visited with deportation—the Company's government having at that period the power of removing, from all parts of India, any person, not native born, whose residence there was considered dangerous. An Anglo-Indian* editor, at length, recollecting that this punishment could not be applied to him, set the government at defiance, and refused to be restrained by the directions of the censor. The government then made a merit of necessity, and removed the censorship, but substituted a set of rules to which they required the conductors of the periodical press to conform.† This was regarded as equivalent to the establishment of a free press, or at least it was professed to be so regarded by those who wished to commit the governor-general to such a measure, as well as by the governor-general himself,

* A man of European descent, but born in India.

† Evidence of C. Lushington, Esq., before select committee of House of Commons, 1832.

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who luxuriated in the public congratulations poured in upon him with reference to this extraordinary exercise of liberality. The press, indeed, was relieved from the censurate, but editors were enjoined to comply with the rules introduced in the place of that more direct check upon publication—they were rebuked by the government, of which the Marquis of Hastings was the head, when the rules were disregarded, and reproof, on these occasions, was not unmingled with reference to the power of inflicting summary punishment upon European offenders. The governor-general, indeed, who had eulogized a free press, and taken credit for bestowing this boon upon India, could not with decency be a party to the infliction of such punishment for using the privilege which he had professed to grant. His immediate successor, Mr. Adam, was not so shackled; and an editor who persevered, after many warnings, in passing the bounds prescribed by the rules, was ordered to quit the country. The authority of the Supreme Court was subsequently obtained to the passing of more stringent rules, and under these rules one or two newspapers were suppressed. The above were the changes to which the press was subjected in Bengal. At Madras, the censorship had never been abolished. At Bombay, the regulations of the Marquis of Hastings were introduced by Mr. Elphinstone, and the censorship abandoned. The more severe regulations, established in Bengal under the government of Mr. Adam, were subsequently adopted at Bombay; but, as the Supreme

Court refused to register them, their effect was limited. Such was the state of the press when Lord William Bentinck arrived in India, and his lordship, though an ostentatious upholder of liberal measures, made no change. During his administration, indeed, little or no interference with the press took place; either none was needed, or Lord William Bentinck was from principle averse to interference, or it might be that the press was, for the most part, laudatory of the governor-general and his measures. Some attempts were made to induce him to take a more decided course, and his lordship answered, that the subject was under consideration. Consideration, however, was all it received, and it was left to Sir Charles Metcalfe to reap the harvest of popular applause consequent upon removing all restraint upon the publication of opinion. Under his brief and temporary administration, an Act was passed repealing the existing regulations, and giving to the press, in regard to the publication of political periodicals, a greater degree of freedom than is enjoyed in England.

On this measure, as may be supposed, opinions, both in India and at home, widely differed. By some it was eulogized for its liberality—by others condemned for its imprudence. Of this latter quality it seems impossible altogether to acquit it. Whether the repeal of all restrictions on the press were or were not good in itself, serious objections lay against the time chosen for effecting it, and the circumstances under which it was accomplished. Sir Charles Metcalfe held the reins of government but

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as the substitute for another. He was aware, not only that his administration was temporary, but that its term would be short. He had reason to believe that his successor was on the sea, and he knew that with the arrival of that successor his authority ended. He might readily imagine that the expected governor-general would be in possession of the views of the home authorities on so important a subject, which Sir Charles Metcalfe certainly was not; and this adds greatly to the amount of his imprudence. He knew that, in setting free the press, he was binding the government to an Act which could not be recalled without multifold inconvenience. The home authorities had indeed the legal power of rescinding the law, but such a step would have been attended by consequences which, to a mind so acute as that of Sir Charles Metcalfe, could not fail to present themselves. He ought not, therefore, to have placed them in a situation which virtually deprived them of the power with which the law invested them. A governor-general permanently appointed ought not to have thus acted—still less should such a course have been taken by a governor-general acting only provisionally. If he thought the press ought to be free, it was his duty to represent his opinion to the home authorities, and to ask their sanction to the passing of an Act to give to that opinion effect. The great danger with regard to governments at a distance from the supreme power at home is, that they should become in practice, if not in theory, absolute and independent. The

evidence of history strikingly illustrates this principle, and every advance, in such a direction, should be carefully restrained.

These remarks apply especially to the position of Sir Charles Metcalfe. The question, whether or not the press, in a country situated as is India, should be free is not perhaps so easily answered. It may readily be conceded that in England, and in every country similarly situated, the press should enjoy perfect liberty—that every individual should have the right of publishing, without control, whatever may please him; and that, after publication, he should be liable to no legal penalties, except in cases where he may have offended against the laws of morality, or given utterance to that which is false as well as scandalous. This much may be granted, but then follow the questions—Is India in the same situation with England? and, if not, can the same degree of liberty which may be safely enjoyed in England be safely conceded to India? No one will answer the former question in the affirmative, and before replying to the latter it would be well to bear in mind the many peculiarities of our position in India. A handful of foreigners exercise rule over millions of natives—some of them of warlike habits—many of excitable temperament. We hold our dominion by a native army composed of men such as have just been described. The people of India too, it should be remembered, have never been accustomed to the use of a free press, nor to any free communication of opinion—they have no experience

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of free institutions at all—such institutions have not, as with the great Saxon communities, grown with their progress as a people and gathered strength from their gradual development—they are in India exotics, and, like other exotics, are in danger either of perishing from neglect, or, from injudicious culture, of running into wild and rank exuberance. If there be one institution of which Englishmen are justly proud, it is that of trial by jury; but trial by jury cannot exist, to any beneficial purpose, excepting in countries where a sense of justice and a spirit of independence are generally diffused. All enlightened men are sensible of the advantages of representative government; but no man, whose opinion is worth taking, would say that representative government could be introduced with benefit, or even with safety, into India in its present condition. As, therefore, exceptions exist with regard to institutions unquestionably beneficial in countries prepared to use them, why should it be thought that there can be no exception to the liberty of the press? Yet it appears that there are those who thus think, for the advocates of an unrestricted press in India seldom attempt to defend it by argument; they content themselves with declamation on the natural right of man to publish his thoughts, on the advantages of knowledge, the tyranny of restraining the free communication of opinion, and topics of the like description. Among the more distinguished champions of the freedom of the press in India, is to be reckoned the author

of the measure by which it was established, Sir Charles Metcalfe himself. The inhabitants of Calcutta addressed him in terms of congratulation on the occasion, and he replied in a manner which, if not perfectly suited to his station as governor-general of India, was distinguished by the talent and energy of an able and sanguine advocate. Such an advocate, more especially when speaking in his own case, is entitled to be heard, and justice requires that the chief arguments of the liberal governor-general should be presented. The following may be considered to be the foremost in importance:—

"To all who doubt the expediency of the liberty of the press, I would say, that they have to shew that it must necessarily cause imminent peril to the public safety, such as would not exist without it, and cannot be averted by salutary laws; for otherwise there can be no doubt that freedom of public discussion, which is nothing more than the freedom of speaking aloud, is a right belonging to the people, which no government has a right to withhold. It also rests with them to shew, that the communication of knowledge is a curse, and not a benefit, and that the essence of good government is to cover the land with darkness; for otherwise, it must be admitted to be one of the most imperative duties of a government to confer the incalculable blessings of knowledge on the people; and by what means can this be done more effectually than by the unrestrained liberty of publication, and by the stimulus which it gives to the powers of the mind?

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If their argument be, that the spread of knowledge may eventually be fatal to our rule in India, I close with them on that point, and maintain that, whatever may be the consequence, it is our duty to communicate the benefits of knowledge. If India could only be preserved as a part of the British empire by keeping its inhabitants in a state of ignorance, our domination would be a curse to the country, and ought to cease.

"But I see more ground for just apprehension in ignorance itself. I look to the increase of knowledge with a hope that it may strengthen our empire; that it may remove prejudices, soften asperities, and substitute a rational conviction of the benefits of our government; that it may unite the people and their rulers in sympathy; and that the differences which separate them may be gradually lessened, and ultimately annihilated. Whatever, however, be the will of Almighty Providence respecting the future government of India, it is clearly our duty, as long as the charge be confided to our hands, to execute the trust to the best of our ability for the good of the people. The promotion of knowledge—of which the liberty of the press is one of the most efficient instruments—is manifestly an essential part of that duty. It cannot be, that we are permitted by divine authority to be here merely to collect the revenues of the country, pay the establishment necessary to keep possession, and get into debt to supply the deficiency. We are doubtless here for higher purposes; one of which is, to pour the enlightened knowledge and civilization,

the arts and sciences of Europe, over the land, and thereby improve the condition of the people. Nothing, surely, is more likely to conduce to these ends than the liberty of the press.

"Those who object to it are further bound to shew that it is not salutary for the government and its functionaries to have the check of a free press on their conduct, and that the exercise of arbitrary power over a restricted press is preferable to the control of the laws over a free one—assumptions which cannot be maintained."

After diverging, to pass a lofty panegyric on Mr. Adam, by whom the severer restraints upon the press were introduced in the year 1823, and conjecturing —on what ground does not appear—that, had that gentleman been alive, and at the head of the government in 1835, he would have been the foremost to propose the abolition of his own law, Sir Charles Metcalfe thus adverted to the difficulty of legislating on the subject of the press:—

"You have alluded most justly to the difficulties that beset the framing of a law to restrain all excesses and injuries which may be committed by means of the press. On this point, I fear, legislation is set at defiance. We cannot apparently enjoy the liberty of the press without being exposed to its licentiousness. We must submit to the attendant evil for the sake of the predominant good. Although the boundary between liberty and licentiousness is perceptible enough in practice, it can hardly be defined

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by law without the danger of encroaching on useful liberty. The laws of England have utterly failed to prevent the licentiousness of the press, and yet, perhaps, could hardly be made more efficient without endangering its freedom. Much, therefore, necessarily depends on the good sense and good taste of those who wield the power which the press confers. The worst enemies of the press are such of its conductors as destroy its influence by prostituting its use, for the gratification of base passions. When public measures are fully and freely discussed, and censured or approved, as may be, in a spirit of candour and justice, the influence of the press must be great and beneficial. But when men find themselves the object of gross personal scurrility, without any reference to public measures, or real character and conduct, they may at first feel pain; because sensitive men, with benevolent dispositions towards all their fellow-creatures, grieve to perceive, that they have rancorous foes, busily employed against them, but lurking in concealment, the cause of whose enmity they know not, and whose wrath they have no power to appease. But they cannot respect the instrument of unjust virulence; they must know that such attacks proceed from personal hatred or wanton malignity; and they must learn to despise calumny, which cannot be guarded against by any goodness of measures or any correctness of conduct. The proper influence of the press is thus destroyed; and ultimately, just censure, which would otherwise be

respected and dreaded, is disregarded and discredited, and being confounded with the mass of indiscriminate abuse, loses its due effect."

The remarks of Sir Charles Metcalfe have been quoted more freely than might have appeared necessary, in order that his own defence of his own case might be exhibited with some degree of fulness and completeness. On first reading, it is not ill calculated to impose on the ear of all, and to carry away the judgment of those who are not accustomed to subject argument, or that which is intended to pass for argument, to any rigorous examination. To readers of a different class, it will appear little more than a string of plausible fallacies, enforced with a degree of pomp and an ostentatious show of conviction which may partially conceal the utter want of precise views manifest throughout, but which cannot supply their place. The first fallacy to be noticed is, that of confounding knowledge—the word being used without qualification or explanation—with political discussion, political declamation, and political invective or abuse. It was against newspapers that the restrictions on the press were mainly operative, and against them only, inasmuch as they entered into political questions in which the government might be interested. Now, that which was forbidden to be published was not knowledge but opinion, the only exception being afforded by the prohibition, during the war, of publishing nautical intelligence which might have been available to the use of the enemy. It was the publication of opinion

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that was in ordinary cases restricted, and that alone. Where, it may be confidently asked, are the instances of government interfering to check, in any degree, the diffusion of that which may be properly called knowledge, whether historical, physical, or abstract? The rulers of British India have done much to aid the spread of knowledge*—nothing to impede it. The warmest advocates for the diffusion of knowledge, in India, may doubt the expediency of exposing the minds of its people to the influence of political agitators, and they are not, therefore, bound to shew that the "essence of good government is to cover the land with darkness," though even darkness is preferable to the false and dangerous meteor which shines only to betray. The assertion that, "if India could only be preserved as a part of the British empire by keeping its inhabitants in a state of ignorance, our domination would be a curse to the country, and ought to cease," is a striking instance of the looseness and vagueness which pervade the entire composition. If England could only maintain her Indian empire by keeping the people in ignorance, and were disposed so to maintain it, how does it follow that her domination would be a curse, and ought to cease? To make this apparent, it must be

* The East-India Company and their government have not obtained the degree of credit, in this respect, which they deserve. Their efforts to diffuse a knowledge of science, and more especially of those departments, as medicine and surgery, which are most closely connected with the well-being of mankind, have been great, though from the simple and unostentatious manner in which they have been made, they have attracted little notice.

shewn that, but for the domination of England, knowledge would be advanced and extended. Could this be hoped for from those into whose hands the government would fall, were the power transferred from the hands which now hold it? Have the Native powers of India been generally distinguished as encouragers of knowledge, or is there any rational ground of hope that they will soon become such? It is, indeed, our duty to give to the people, in the measure that they are prepared to receive them, the advantages which we ourselves enjoy; but if we fail of the just performance of this duty—if we render the condition of its people no better than it would be under their Native rulers—it cannot justly be said (if we make it no worse) that our domination is a curse, and ought, therefore, to cease.

So again, the assertion that, if we deny knowledge to be an evil, we must admit it to be one of the most imperative duties of government to confer its blessings on the people—this is one of those sweeping assumptions which require to be considerably qualified before they be either admitted or denied. In a country, like India, requiring an external impulse, it is desirable that the government should actively encourage the extension of knowledge. There, a maxim which has been laid down for the government of kingdoms, but which is most unsuited to the state of England, is strictly applicable—to do every thing for the people—little or nothing by them. In England, and countries in the like situation, where a portion of the people have attained a very high

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state of mental cultivation, an active interference on the part of government is to be deprecated, as tending rather to embarrass than to aid the progress of knowledge. But it is remarkable that the position laid down is not consistent with that which follows, and which is, professedly, intended to point out the means by which governments are to "confer the blessings of knowledge" on the governed. One only is suggested, and that is, the permission of an "unrestrained liberty of publication;" in effect, a total abstinence from interference of any kind. The communication of knowledge to the people is stated to be one of the most imperative duties of government; and if an inquirer demanded how is this duty to be performed, the answer is, by doing nothing. Let this mode of dealing with knowledge be applied to that which is unquestionably one of the duties of government. It is the duty of government to protect life and property by laws, wisely made, and justly and efficiently administered. What would be thought of the statesman or legislator, who, in answer to the question, in what manner may this duty be best discharged, should say, by abstaining from all interference with the people, and allowing them to settle their disputes in their own way?

Sir Charles Metcalfe, it will be observed, expressed great apprehension of the effects of ignorance, and great hopes of the good effects of diffusing knowledge in India. His apprehensions will, to many persons of sound and sober judgment, appear

chimerical; but his hopes are those which all good men would desire to cherish. He had, however, previously taken much higher and stronger ground as the champion of knowledge, by declaring that, though its diffusion might, eventually, prove fatal to our dominion in India, our duty was the same as though no such results were to be looked for—and this is the just mode of regarding the matter. We are not, from selfish motives, to withhold from India that which its people have as good a right to enjoy as our own. We are to confer on India all the good in our power. We are to allow truth free course, without regard to personal or national consequences. This is plainly our duty; and it is to be lamented that it should be obscured, or rendered doubtful, by being maintained in language and upon principles borrowed from a bad school. The sneer in which Sir Charles Metcalfe indulged, in reminding his auditors that we were in India for other purposes than merely to collect the revenues, pay the establishments, and get into debt to supply the deficiency, might have been spared; for no one knew better than himself that those other purposes had been kept in view, and great sacrifices made to promote them. And never, perhaps, did there occur a more striking instance of begging the question, than in the assumption, that nothing was more likely to conduce to the spread of "the enlightened knowledge and civilization, the arts and sciences of Europe, over India," than a licentious and unbridled political press.

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Those who object to the acting governor-general's views are required by him "to shew that it is not salutary for the government and its functionaries to have the check of a free press on their conduct, and that the exercise of arbitrary power over a restricted press is preferable to the control of the laws over a free one—assumptions which," he says, "cannot be maintained." This last assertion is remarkable, seeing that, in some sense and to some extent, they must have been maintained by those who established the restrictions which Sir Charles Metcalfe swept away. But passing over this strange instance of oblivion, it is evident that the well-sounding sentence just quoted involves a fallacy not less gross than that previously detected. It is the fallacy of assuming that which is good in particular cases, to be good in all—of broadly laying down principles as universally just and true, which, with certain conditions and under certain circumstances, are just and true; but which, under other conditions and other circumstances, are erroneous. It is most salutary that government and its functionaries should have the check of a free press on their conduct, in a country like England, where all existing institutions are free—where a large portion of power has been for centuries vested in the people—where the people are daily called upon to take part in the administration of the laws—where the public, though comprising the advocates of antagonist principles, and of various modifications of those principles, are yet one nation, governed by rulers of their own race and country, defended by

soldiers and seamen who are their fellow-countrymen, and held together by the bonds of a community of origin, of language, of political rights, and, to a great extent, of religious belief. It would be worse than idle to ask whether the situation of India bears any resemblance to this; and, where every thing else is different, why should there be uniformity upon one point, and one only? Would Sir Charles Metcalfe, or any other advocate of the unlimited freedom of the press in India, be willing to commit the interests of that country to a House of Commons chosen by and from its people in the same manner as is that of the United Kingdom? Would it be advisable to issue writs, calling upon the classes of persons who, in India, may appear to possess some degree of resemblance to the forty-shilling freeholders of our counties, and the burgesses of our towns, to elect the members of a House of Parliament to be assembled in Calcutta for the exercise, with regard to India, of the powers possessed by the body thus elected at home? Such a form of government may, at some future time, become safe, and when safe, it will be expedient; but ages must elapse before India is prepared for institutions as free as those of Britain. None will say that India is as yet prepared for them; and while it is necessary—avowedly necessary by the common consent of all—to withhold from the people of India some of the more solid and valuable privileges of our more advanced state, how does it happen that it should be absolutely unpardonable to deny them the plea-

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sure of reading unlicensed newspapers? Those who object to a free press in India are not bound, as Sir Charles Metcalfe would contend, to shew that it is not salutary generally: it is enough that, like many other privileges of the like kind, it is not fitted for India in its present state. "The freedom of public discussion," it is said, "is nothing more than the freedom of speaking aloud," which, it is added, "is a right belonging to the people which no government has a right to withhold." Here, again, is great looseness in the use of words, and a consequent confusion of things widely different. To say that the freedom of public discussion is nothing more than the freedom of speaking aloud, is true, so long as oral discussion is meant; but it is not in the sense in which the writer must have intended to use the words; for by public discussion he must have meant discussion by means of the press. This differs from oral discussion in more than one point. It is unimportant whether a government has the right of withholding from an individual the right of speaking aloud, because, whether it have or not, it has not the ability, without depriving the man of the power of speech; so long as he retain that, he may give utterance to whatever he may please. You may punish, but you cannot prevent. This is not the case with the press. You may interdict or limit its use, and you have the power of carrying your restraints into effect. Again, the influence of the press is much wider than that of speech. A man can influence but a comparatively small circle, when restricted to the

personal communication of his opinions. By the introduction of the press, his power of diffusing them is rendered almost unlimited.

It appears that Sir Charles Metcalfe was aware of the dangers attending his favourite measure, and that he knowingly risked those dangers in carrying it out. Alluding to the difficulties of framing a law to restrain the excesses of the press, he expressed his belief that, on such a point, legislation was set at defiance—that the enjoyment of the liberty of the press involved the necessity of being exposed to its licentiousness. The laws in England, he remarked, had failed in preventing the licentiousness of the press, and he intimated, though with some appearance of doubt, that they could not be made more efficient without endangering its freedom. The expression of doubt was superfluous. Any attempt to give to the law additional means of curbing the licentiousness of the press would, certainly, destroy its liberty, and, in England, we must, in the language of Sir Charles Metcalfe, "submit to the attendant evil for the sake of the predominant good." But here the good is predominant. A man in robust health may indulge in exercises which would be injurious to an invalid, and may derive benefit from them. A man of mature age and competent knowledge may direct, to his own benefit and that of society, those powerful elements of nature which, judiciously employed, become useful ministers to the wants of man, but which, in the hands of a child or of one unacquainted with their manage-

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ment would produce nothing but mischief. The child, in time, may become qualified to guide them aright, and India may, in time, be prepared for an extent of freedom not inferior to that enjoyed by the nations most favoured in this respect. But time is wanting. The freedom of Englishmen is the growth of centuries. Why should it be thought that in India the same results can be suddenly attained by inscribing words on a piece of paper or parchment?

In all colonial communities—or communities which, though not strictly colonial in their origin, are in the position of dependencies—the character of the press is far inferior to that of the parent, or protecting country—inferior in talent, knowledge, and high principle. Local squabbles—for it would be wrong to give to such disputes a more dignified name—furnish a large proportion of their material, and local libels supply the place of better sources of excitement.* This difference of character Sir

* In India, perhaps, this is not so much the case as in some other places. But instances might readily be adduced to shew that the remark is not inapplicable even there. For example—the recent disputes about the mode and circumstances—for it was only the mode and circumstances—of carrying on steam communication between India and England—not only called forth a degree of heat disproportioned to the occasion, and a display of magniloquence unsuited to any occasion, but were conducted with a spirit of personality offensive to good taste, and, altogether, in a manner as deficient in dignity, as were some of the questions disputed about in importance.

The character of part of the Indian press, soon after the period when it was thought expedient to set it free, is thus described by

Charles Metcalfe seems to have passed over, for he could not have been ignorant of it. With him, a free press was a blessing not only whatever might be the circumstances of the country, but, apparently, whatever might be the character of the press. It is true that, in the course of his address, he did advert to the possibility of freedom being abused, and that he read the editorial world a lecture, by which, it is charitably to be hoped, they were edified. It is true, he warned them, that by the abuse of the freedom of the press "its proper influence" was destroyed; but it does not seem to have occurred to him that it still might have an influence which, though not "proper," would be wide and powerful—powerful for evil, though feeble for good. He opened the flood-gates, and then conjured the water to flow softly.*

one of the most respectable of the Indian journals :—"The *Delhi Gazette* announces the retirement of the editor of that paper in consequence of the violent and personal nature of the attack of the *Agra Ukbar*. We think the tone of the Mofussil journals towards each other is very discreditable to the press, and highly prejudicial to its best interests. Nobody unwilling to 'run a muck' should undertake the office of editor beyond the Mahratta ditch; within it we do now and then indulge in a gentle, sometimes a rather brisk passage of arms; but our brethren of the Mofussil seem to think it the great object of their editorial life to bespatter each other with mud in every number of their respective journals."—*Bengal Hurkaru*, March 19th, 1836.

These editors seem to have been little benefited by Sir Charles Metcalfe's good advice.

* In comparing the colonial press with that of the mother country, the few foul and filthy prints which exist in the latter, to the disgrace alike of their conductors and their readers, are of course excluded from consideration. The character assigned

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A. D. 1835.

A. D. 1836.

The celebrated Press Law was passed on the 3rd of August, and on the 5th of March following, the authority of Sir Charles Metcalfe was superseded

to the press of the United Kingdom is based on that of the daily morning and evening papers of the metropolis, and the more respectable of the weekly papers, together with the great mass of provincial prints, which, for the most part, contribute to maintain the reputation of the press by following the honourable example set by their metropolitan leaders.

The opinion of a very high authority—perhaps, the very highest living authority on Indian affairs—upon the freedom of the Indian press, cannot fail to be both instructive and interesting. In his answer to a series of questions circulated by the Board of Commissioners in 1832, one of which related to the press, the Honourable Mountstuart Elphinstone, after adverting to the restrictions then existing, thus declared his views:—"It may be taken for granted that if the European press be free, the native one cannot long be otherwise. If all be free, we shall be in a predicament such as no state has yet experienced. In other countries the use of the press has gradually extended along with the improvements of the government and the intelligence of the people; but we shall have to contend at once with the most refined theories of Europe and with the prejudices and fanaticism of Asia, both rendered doubly formidable by the imperfect education of those to whom every appeal will be addressed." These, it should be remembered, are the sentiments, not of a bigoted opponent of improvement, but of a statesman of large and enlightened views, whose name is inseparably associated with the cause of education in India—a cause of which he was the earnest advocate and zealous patron.

It is remarkable that Sir Charles Metcalfe, who took advantage of his temporary occupation of the office of governor-general to relieve the press from all restraint, not many years before expressed himself with some sharpness on the inconvenience arising from the proceedings of government finding their way into the newspapers. This was in a minute recorded by him on the 18th of October, 1830. In less than five years afterwards he deprived the government of all power of preventing the evil of which he complained.

by the arrival of his successor, Lord Auckland, who had some months before been nominated to the office by the Court of Directors, and confirmed in it by the approbation of the Crown.*

* His lordship was the son of one of the most steady adherents of the administration of Mr. Pitt, under which his services were rewarded by a peerage. He acquired distinction as a diplomatist, and also as a statistical and economical writer. His son forsook the politics of his family and attached himself to the Whig party.

CHAPTER XXX.

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THE year in which Lord Auckland arrived in India was completed without the occurrence of any event sufficiently remarkable to require notice, and the first half of the ensuing year passed with equal tranquillity. The calm was then interrupted by some violent proceedings in that perpetual seat of trouble and disquiet, Oude. These were consequent upon the death of the King, of whom, it is not too much to say that, low as is the ordinary standard, whether of mind or morals, attained by Eastern princes, he fell far below it in both respects. One of the most profligate, he was at the same time one of the most weak. His crimes and his excesses
1837. were terminated by death on the 7th July, 1837. The British resident, Colonel Low, on learning that the life of the King was considered to be in danger, wrote without delay to the brigadier commanding in Oude, to have a thousand men in readiness to march at a moment's notice. Having despatched the order, the resident proceeded to the palace with two officers, one of them the residency surgeon. They found the King dead, and such precautions as were at the moment available were immediately

taken for guarding the palace and protecting the property which it contained. More effectually to provide for these purposes, a second order was despatched to the brigadier in command, requiring him to send off five companies in advance to the palace, and to bring down all the disposable troops, both infantry and artillery. In the meantime measures were taken for investing the successor recognized by the British government with the external ensigns of sovereignty. This prince was an uncle of the deceased King, and the grounds upon which he was supported by the British government were these. Saadut Ali, the grandfather of the monarch just departed, had ten sons, the eldest of whom, named Gazee-oo-deen Hyder, succeeded him. Gazee-oo-deen had only one son, Nusseer-oo-deen Hyder, the unhappy prince whose death had led to the necessity of making provision for the vacant throne. Nusseer-oo-deen had at one time acknowledged two sons, but he had subsequently disavowed them, and their pretensions were believed by the British authorities to be unfounded. The right of succession would, thereupon, have passed to the second of the sons of Saadut Ali; but he had died previously to Nusseer-oo-deen, and, by the Mahomedan law, the death of an heir before his right to succeed has accrued nullifies the claim of his children. No claim is transmissible through one who has himself never enjoyed possession of the thing claimed. The succession, therefore, passed to the third son of Saadut Ali, a prince named Nusseer-

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ood-Dowlah, and he it was whom it was proposed to elevate to the vacant musnud. This intention was not carried into effect without a struggle. The resident apprehended that the Padshah Begum, or Queen Dowager, might attempt some movement in favour of one of the pretended sons, and he had despatched a message enjoining her to remain at her own residence, situate about four miles from the regal palace. The messenger found the Begum's followers ready to advance upon the city, and returned to communicate the intelligence to the resident, bringing with him a vakeel from the Begum, entreating that she might be permitted to see the corpse of the deceased sovereign. In the meantime the new King had been conducted to the palace, where he arrived about three o'clock on the morn-

D. 1837.

ing of the 8th of July. He was a man advanced in years and in feeble health, and while he indulged in a short repose before entering upon the fatigue of being enthroned, the resident and his assistants retired to arrange the ceremonies with which the event was to be accompanied. Their conference was disturbed by the arrival of intelligence that the Begum's troops were approaching the city, and were close to one of the gates. They were quickly before it, and upon the refusal of Captain Paton, a British officer in attendance on the resident, to allow it to be opened, they resorted to the strength and sagacity of the elephant to effect an entrance for them. The first animal which made the attempt failed; a second, vigorously urged on by an

adroit driver, succeeded in dashing in one leaf of the gate, Captain Paton narrowly escaping being crushed by its fall. An opening being thus effected, the Begum's followers rushed in, Captain Paton being knocked down by them and made prisoner. After a few minutes spent in parley, the insurgents pushed on for the palace, which they entered. Further orders directing the advance of the British force had been prepared, but the Begum's followers having possession of the gates, both of the palace and the city, there was no opportunity of despatching them, and the resident with his few attendants were, for a short time, virtually prisoners. The pretender, who had arrived in company with the Begum, was formally seated on the throne. The resident, with some difficulty, obtained admission to the place where the ceremony was performed, and after some fruitless endeavours to persuade the Begum (who was present in a covered palanquin) of the utter hopelessness of the attempt in which she had engaged, he succeeded, by the aid of one of her servants, in escaping, together with his attendants. Captain Paton had previously been released from durance by a small party of the British force, detached for the purpose. The five advanced companies soon arrived, and were followed, after a short interval, by the remainder of the British force, with some guns. Communications between the parties now took place. They ended with an intimation from the resident, that if, within a quarter of an hour, the Begum did not surrender, and repair to

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the place where he was standing with the guns, an attack would be commenced. The time expired, and the Begum did not avail herself of the opportunity offered for averting mischief. A fire of grape was then opened, and a party of British troops proceeded, by various ways, to effect an entrance into the building, in which the mock King, with the Begum and her followers, were acting their respective parts in the pageant of the court. The insurgents were soon dislodged, and the Begum, with the unhappy boy who had afforded the pretence for the disturbance, were made prisoners. Between thirty and forty of the Begum's followers were known to be killed or wounded during the assault, and the number of wounded was probably greater, since some in this situation may be supposed to have escaped. A few of the British sepoys suffered, but the resident had the satisfaction of finding that the new sovereign and his family were safe. No time was lost in giving to his title all the strength that it could derive from the display of his possession of the musnud (a point of great importance in Eastern states), and as soon as the hall could be cleared of the painful evidence of the recent affray afforded by the bodies of the slain, Nusseer-ood-Dowlah was solemnly placed on the throne which the pretender had scarcely quitted.

The outbreak, thus terminated, seems to have been, from the commencement to its conclusion, singularly ill-judged and hopeless. With a band of followers not considerable in point of number, and

who, it appears, might be regarded rather as an armed mob than a regular force, the Begum ventured to oppose the British government, whose force, though numerically weak at the time, was capable of being increased, within a very short period, to a degree of strength which would render successful resistance impossible. When in possession of the palace, the insurgents seem to have had no settled plan of action. They placed their puppet on the throne, and appear to have been content. The King was in their power, but they neither attempted to remove him beyond the reach of British aid, nor, what was perhaps more to be expected, did they seek to get rid of his claim by the sacrifice of his life. This, perhaps, was owing to fear rather than to any better feeling; for though they abstained from any attempt on the lives of the King and his attendants, they treated them with insult, and vented their hatred in swaggering, threatening language and actions. It is to be lamented that the British force was not at the first sufficiently strong to have overawed the insurgents, and deterred them from even entertaining a thought of resistance; but it appears that the whole British force in the city amounted to only two companies and a half, one company being employed as the treasury guard, half a company as the gaol guard, and the remaining company as the honorary guard of the resident. From the two former duties few men could of course be spared, and those that could be taken were required at other points where plunder was to be apprehended.

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It seems extraordinary indeed, after allowing for all these circumstances, that the Begum's party should so readily have gained admission to the palace; but it is to be remarked, that the defence of the palace was in native hands, and it is probable that it was not merely want of courage, nor want of vigilance, nor want of military skill that led to the result. The following passage from a paper drawn up by the second-assistant to the resident may elucidate the matter:—"The smallness of the guard at that outer gate, there being no force placed on the outside of it, as the minister positively declares had been ordered by him, and as was actually done at several of the others which were passed by Lieutenant Shakespear on his road to the Nawaub Nusseer-ood-Dowlah; the supineness of many of the palace guards and servants; the perversion of orders sent by the minister on different occasions; his declaration since, that there were many traitors in the palace—all tend strongly to induce the suspicion that the gate was left purposely unguarded to the attack of the Padshah Begum's troops. The latter, however, having once actually entered within the palace walls, could, from no position, have been so happily expelled with less loss to our own troops and more disgrace to themselves, than from the Burra-durree,* the scene both of their short-lived triumph and of their prompt and well-deserved punishment."

The residence of the Begum and the pretender to the throne, in Oude, being found likely to en-

* The hall where the enthronement took place.

danger the continuance of the public peace there, they were removed into the Company's territories; and this step put an end to all attempts to assail the authority of the ruling prince by force. His title, however, was impugned by Yemeen-ood-Dowlah, the eldest son of Shums-ood-Dowlah. The person last named was the second son of Saadut Ali, and the elder brother of Nusseer-ood-Dowlah, the prince whom the British government had recently placed on the musnud of Oude. Had Shums-ood-Dowlah survived his nephew, the deceased king, he would undoubtedly have been entitled to succeed to the throne; but, dying before him, he could convey no right to his children; the Mahometan law, as already explained, not admitting the doctrine of representation. Of this, no one, having even a slight acquaintance with the subject, is ignorant; yet Yemeen-ood-Dowlah set up a claim upon grounds which, though recognized as valid by the law of England and many other countries, are rejected by the interpreters of the code of Mahomet. It is but just, however, to state that, on an intimation that his claim was inadmissible, he acquiesced at once in the decision, and made no attempt to push his pretensions further. A new claimant thereupon arose in the person of one named Akbul-ood-Dowlah, alleged to be the second surviving son of Shums-ood-Dowlah, but calling himself the eldest. This personage, under European advice, proceeded to England, and there addressed the Court of Directors of the East-India Company. The folly of undertaking a long

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voyage to assert a claim known to be absolutely and undoubtedly bad, and with a certainty of its being rejected, need not be dwelt upon. What profit the advisers of the claimant derived from the expedition cannot be known; but they were fully aware that none would accrue to the person on whose behalf they affected to act. Such occurrences are not, indeed, uncommon in the history of British India; and they will probably never cease altogether until native powers shall acquire sufficient acquaintance with the principles of British policy to prevent their becoming the dupes of unprincipled adventurers.

The origin of a very eventful series of operations should now, according to the order of time, be related; but, to avoid needlessly breaking the continuity of the narrative when begun, it is postponed for the purpose of directing attention to certain proceedings affecting the throne of Sattara, which strikingly illustrate the remarks called forth by the idle and ridiculous claim of Akbul-ood-Dowlah to the throne of Oude.

It will be recollected, that the Rajah of Sattara was the nominal head of the great Mahratta confederacy, but that, for a long period before that confederacy was broken, all power had passed from his hands into those of his usurping officers. When the Marquis of Hastings overthrew the Peishwa, and held at his own disposal the forfeited territories of that chief, he, with an unwise liberality, drew the Rajah of Sattara from the situation of a captive,

and restored to him much of the dignity and some of the power which he claimed to possess, but had never before obtained or exercised. Credulous, indeed, must be he who relies on the gratitude of native princes. The Marquis of Hastings professed so to rely, and, perhaps, he was sincere. In the case of the Rajah of Sattara the result was that which has so frequently occurred, and which might reasonably be looked for. The Rajah, at length, became suspected—inquiry took place; it was ascertained that, in contravention of the treaty to which he owed his power, he was habitually carrying on correspondence with various parties, some of whom were enemies of the British government—that he was fomenting hostilities against that government—and, further, it was alleged, and to the satisfaction of many proved, that he had attempted to seduce some native officers of that government from their allegiance. It was proved that he had, for a long course of years, carried on a correspondence with the Portuguese authorities at Goa, the object of which was to engage them in an alliance against the British government. Portugal was to furnish an army to recover for the Rajah the Mahratta territories, of which the confederacy had been dispossessed by the English; and when the task was completed, they were to receive a due reward in money or territory, or both. It is obvious that these designs were too wild, ridiculous, and extravagant to be entertained by the most ill-informed European; but they were

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not beyond the belief of an Oriental prince, who indulged in follies which entitled him to be ranked among the weakest of his imbecile order.*

With Appa Sahid, the infamous ex-Rajah of Nagpore, the Rajah of Sattara appears for several years to have carried on a treacherous intercourse. The fact of his tampering with soldiers in the British service seems hardly more doubtful. Certain native officers in the Company's service professed to have received from a Brahmin communications indicative of a powerfully hostile feeling towards the British government. These communications being repeated, the officers reported them to their superiors, and were instructed by them as to the course they were to pursue. They were subsequently admitted to the presence of the Dewan, and, ultimately, it was said, to that of the Rajah himself, whose language, at the interview, was similar to that which had previously been held by the Dewan and the Brahmin. It cannot

* "That the Rajah's mind has become weak to an extraordinary degree is but too evident in his actions. He has lately formed a company of women, arming them with muskets, and even drilling them to the management of guns, cast and mounted expressly for the purpose. Women are also taught to manage elephants, to act as chobdars, massals, &c. Every designing gossain or faqueer, offering his services to propitiate the gods in favour of his wishes, is attended to; and, at this time, three sects of Brahmins are performing anaostan ceremonies, at a heavy expense, to secure the departure of a ghost supposed to haunt the palace, and for other objects equally absurd and contemptible."—Letter from Colonel Lodwick, resident, to Sir Robert Grant, governor of Bombay, 13th September, 1836.

be denied that upon the face of it much of the above statement is improbable, but though the opportunity was afforded him, the Rajah was unable to shake it; and the improbability is greatly lessened on recollecting the weak and wild character of the prince against whom the charge was made. Further, the difficulties of disbelief appear to be greater even than those of belief. Part of what was stated was certainly true; and though it has been alleged that the scheme was intended to advance the interests of the brother of the Rajah, at his expense, no reasonable hope of promoting such an end by such means could at the time have been entertained; indeed, the possibility of connecting them would have been almost inconceivable, and this view of the matter is more incredible than that which implicates the Rajah. But whether he were guilty or innocent of the last charge, he had unquestionably deprived himself of all claim to plead against the English government the obligations of the treaty under which he had exchanged the condition of a titled slave for the exercise of actual sovereignty; for the conditions of that treaty he had notoriously broken. Still, there was a disposition to view his cause with favour, and he might have preserved the power which he had abused, if he had not unhappily followed the example of other weak and infatuated Indian princes. He distrusted the British government, but he gave credit to the professions of certain European advisers; to them he committed himself and his interests, and it will be seen with what success. There was the best

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disposition to treat him with kindness and indulgence. At the time when it became necessary to dispose of the Rajah's case, a new governor arrived at Bombay. He was a man who in former years, when employed as a servant of the Company in diplomatic duties, had established for himself the character of being eminently the friend of native princes and of the native community. No man ever enjoyed greater popularity in India than Sir James Carnac, who had now returned to take the chief place in the government of Bombay.* He arrived
A.D. 1839. there on the 30th of May, and on the 19th of June he recorded a minute expressive of his opinion on the case of the Rajah of Sattara. This paper commenced with an avowal that the criminality of the Rajah had been clearly proved, and the governor then proceeded to inquire how, under the circumstances, the offender should be dealt with. Three modes of treating the case were pointed out: first, by subjecting the Rajah to a formal trial, and after inquiry made and sentence passed, visiting him with appropriate punishment; secondly, by proceeding in the mode by which wrongs between independent states are avenged—commencing hostilities, taking possession of the Rajah's territory, and acting as circumstances might justify under the right of conquest; thirdly, by bringing the Rajah to a sense

* It is said that intelligent natives who remembered the virtues of Major Carnac, when resident at Baroda, exclaimed, on hearing that he was returning in the higher character of governor of Bombay, "All will be well now."

of his errors by remonstrance, and then giving him amnesty for the past, in the hope that his future conduct might be more worthy of his station and his relation to the British government. To the adoption of the first course several objections existed. There was no ordinary tribunal to which the Rajah could be made amenable, and a special one must have been created for the purpose. Against such a tribunal, however constituted, clamour would be loud. "I know," said Sir James Carnac, "that from the civil and military services of India there would be no difficulty whatever in selecting commissioners who would perform their duty without regard to any thing but justice; but I need not add, that in the conduct of states, as of individuals, it is most important, not only to avoid wrong, but to make this avoidance apparent, and to place the character of the state for integrity and good faith beyond the possibility of question." Further, the competency of such a tribunal might have been plausibly questioned. By assuming the power of subjecting the Rajah to a legal trial, the British government would have placed him in the situation of a subject, whereas he had always been treated as a sovereign.

The position of the princes connected with the British government like the Rajah of Sattara is, indeed, anomalous, and perhaps incapable of being settled, with reference to the principles of national law, with any degree of precision. But, from the attempt to deal with the Rajah as with an ordinary subject, the minds of many honest and enlightened

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men would have recoiled, and many more, neither honest nor enlightened, would have pretended to recoil from such a course. All, whose malignity against the British government had been inflamed by disappointments; all, whose hope of subsistence, or of wealth, might rest upon the exercise of their talent in taking advantage of the ignorance and feeding the prejudices of native princes, would have affected the horror of virtuous indignation, and have lent their voices to swell the chorus of pity for an injured prince, and of wrath against his powerful neighbour. It is, indeed, the part of wisdom to disregard such ebullitions (they being generally the product of self-interest, and not of even mistaken philanthropy), but it is also the part of wisdom to be careful not to afford to those who raise them a decent pretence. "This point," Sir James Carnac observed, "would, I fear, be taken up by all who have any feelings of hostility to the British government. We should be accused of degrading a sovereign from his acknowledged rank, of offering violence to his feelings and dignity, and of assuming a right of superiority to which we have no just claim. It is not necessary to ask whether these charges would be well or ill founded; it is sufficient that they would be made, and without necessity the British government ought not, in my judgment, to incur them." If a hostile course were inevitable, the governor declared that he should much prefer the second course—that of proceeding against the Rajah as a prince bound by treaty, but who, having

violated the conditions of the engagement, was at the mercy of the other party thereto, which party was at liberty to enforce its rights by war or otherwise. But the necessity for extreme measures he thought did not exist. The Rajah, he remarked, could not be regarded as a very formidable foe to the British empire, and those with whom he had been connected were as little formidable as himself. No results, it was observed, have followed, "except the transfer of money to agents and adventurers"—those standing curses to Indian princes. The Rajah had, indeed, as was stated in the minute, manifested great weakness and no inconsiderable portion of ingratitude; but it was added, "we have nothing to fear, and we can afford to act with generosity." Under the influence of these views, Sir James Carnac gave a decided preference to the mildest of the three courses of proceeding, and he suggested either that the resident should make a fitting representation to the Rajah, or that this duty should be discharged by the governor in person, the latter course being, in his judgment, more advisable. This being done, and the admonition duly received and responded to by the Rajah, it was intended that he should be frankly forgiven.

On the following day the governor recorded another minute, descriptive of the mode in which the intentions of the government towards the Rajah of Sattara should be carried into effect. The spirit in which it was proposed to deal with the offending Rajah may be understood from the following passage,

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which occurs near the commencement of the minute:—"It will be inconsistent with our proposed amnesty for the past, to make any demand which can justly be regarded as a punishment; and under this impression I at once abandon the measure which appears to have been thought of by the government of the late Sir Robert Grant,* of requiring the Rajah to maintain a contingent of horse for the service of the British government. Our demands should be limited as much as possible, and should be confined only to those which will again place the Rajah in the precise situation intended by the treaty of September, 1819, and will insure the most efficient protection to all persons who have become obnoxious to him in consequence of the part they have taken in recent proceedings." The views of Sir James Carnac were adopted by the other members of the Bombay government (though, as to the important question of how the Rajah should be treated, opposed to their own), and the governor-general in council having sanctioned the grant of amnesty to the Rajah, the proposed conditions of the grant, and the visit of the governor of Bombay to Sattara, Sir James Carnac set out with a sanguine hope of rescuing the Rajah from the dangerous position in which he had been placed by the evil counsels of designing men, and of restoring friendly relations between him and the British government. He arrived at Sattara on the

* Predecessor of Sir James Carnac, and whose death led to the appointment of the latter.

22nd of August, and on the 23rd had his first interview with the Rajah. He explained in firm but conciliatory language the position in which the Rajah stood, and the intentions of the British government towards him; and among much admirable advice, not the least valuable portion was that referred to in the following passage of the report made by Sir James Carnac to his council on the subject of this interview:—"I recalled to his recollection the warning long ago given to him by his friend, Mr. Elphinstone, against placing his trust and confidence in vakeels and low and intriguing agents, and earnestly urged him to discard from his councils the numerous agencies he had established." The conditions of the intended amnesty had been embodied in a memorandum drawn up in the Mahratta language for the information of the Rajah, and this was placed in his hands. This paper, after referring to the infractions of the existing treaty by the Rajah, declared the readiness of the British government entirely to overlook them on the conditions which follow—that the Rajah should now bind himself strictly and in good faith to act up to the articles of the treaty of 1819; that he should agree to certain specified arrangements affecting the interests of his brother; that he should dismiss from his councils and exclude from his territories an offensive and dangerous minister, who was named, and confirm a guarantee of safety given by the British government to certain parties. These were the whole of the conditions demanded from the Rajah

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—and these he rejected. No sacrifice was required —no penalty inflicted—but the Rajah, with a perverseness rarely equalled, spurned the friendship which was tendered him on terms neither burdensome nor dishonourable. He demanded in what particulars he had violated the treaty of 1819, and on the three points being stated—the intrigues with the Portuguese government at Goa, the holding treacherous intercourse with the ex-Rajah of Nagpore, and the tampering with the troops of the British government—he made no remark on either the first or third, thus tacitly admitting his guilt on those points. On the second, he took a course which would have been very proper in an advocate defending a client on legal and technical grounds, but which were scarcely consistent with a consciousness of innocence when adopted by a principal in a conference not partaking in any way of the nature of a legal inquiry. Some intercepted letters from the ex-Rajah of Nagpore to him being adverted to, he did not deny having been engaged in correspondence with that person, but dwelt upon the fact of no answers from him being produceable. A second interview took place, but with no better result. The Rajah declared that he had three times refused to sign the original treaty, which, whether true or not, was by no means inconsistent with probability. Evidence existed to shew that so far from being grateful for what the bounty of the British government had conferred on him, he was dissatisfied that he had not received more—that he had aspired to

restore the throne of Sevagee, and had affected the title of King of the Hindoos, to which his paid advocates had openly asserted his claims, and had accused the British government of injustice in not recognizing them. That the indelibility of Mahratta claims should have been seriously asserted amidst the prostrate thrones, Mahometan and Hindoo, whose fragments overspread Asia, is indeed calculated to excite astonishment, more especially when those who undertake their maintenance are of European birth and education. Native power, though occasionally accompanied by a barbarian magnificence, possesses little to captivate the imagination even in its splendour, and little to excite the feelings of the sentimentalist in its decline. But of all the powers of India, that of the Mahrattas is the least calculated to call forth honest sympathy; and a foreign apologist can scarcely be listened to with patience, because it is scarcely possible that he should be believed to be sincere. If the misguided princes of the East, who lavish large sums in the purchase of European agency, were aware of the precise value of that agency, they would soon withhold their useless liberality, and retain in their coffers the wealth which for the most part they so dearly prize, but which, in such instances, they dispense so foolishly.

The Rajah, after a short interval, signified a desire again to visit the governor of Bombay; a third interview was granted, and it was the last. The obstinacy of the misguided prince led him still to

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resist the terms offered him, although the main condition insisted on was only a promise of adherence to the treaty by which he was previously bound—the remaining articles being of comparatively trivial import. It was, however, in all probability, that first article, though it enforced no new obligation, that constituted the chief obstacle to an amicable conclusion of the dispute, for he observed—not to the governor, but to the resident—that by assenting to it, he should be reduced to the condition of a mamlutdar farmer, a manager of a district. Well might Sir James Carnac exclaim, "What, may I ask, was this, but a formal renunciation, and on the Rajah's part, of a most important condition of the existing treaty? And how is it possible for us to maintain friendly relations with a prince who so much mistakes his real position, and thinks so lightly of the obligations which he has contracted, and under which he holds his territories?" According to his own statement, he must have regarded himself as a mere manager of a district under the treaty of 1819; for such was his view of the effect of the first article tendered to him in 1839, which only required him to signify his intention of adhering to the former treaty. His position, therefore, had never been that which he thought it ought to be; and this feeling will account for his intrigues, though it will not excuse them. He was destined to pay a severe penalty for the indulgence of his infatuated hopes, cherished, as they had been, by advisers far more culpable than himself. The governor

saw him no more after the interview which has been last noticed, but the resident, Colonel Ovans, waited on him to receive his final decision. That decision was confirmatory of his previous resolution, and the necessary result was, that the Rajah descended from the throne, and took up his residence within the British dominions; his brother being elevated to the place which he had quitted.

The Rajah was the victim of interested parasites, some of whom seduced him into acts indicative of hostile feelings to his British protectors, while others encouraged him to persevere in repelling the hand of forgiveness stretched out to save him, by making professions, which they knew to be false, of power to enable him to defy the local government, and by holding out expectations of success in such a course, which they knew to be fallacious. Of the amount of the money expended, in enriching these persons, no precise account can be given, but it must have been very large. The number of his agents was almost incredible. He had European agents and native agents—agents at Bombay—agents at Calcutta—agents in England; two missions having been dispatched thither. The local press was freely employed to revile the government and support the Rajah, and Englishmen did not hesitate to take the unhappy prince's money in payment for exertions directed against the interests of their own country, and the safety of its Indian dominions.*

* The plunder of the Rajah by agents of various kinds, and the deceptions practised on him by those persons, are largely illus-

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The cause of the Rajah was taken up in England with much warmth, and without doubt from different motives—motives varying from those of the highest and most honourable character to those of the meanest and most despicable origin. But when the resources of argumentation were exhausted, it could not be shewn that the Rajah had not violated the treaty by which he held his throne. The only question that could with fairness be raised was, whether or not he should be forgiven. Upon this point, however, the advocates on both sides might have suspended discussion, for the Rajah obstinately refused to be forgiven. Sir James Carnac left England impressed with a desire to adopt the mildest of all practicable modes of dealing with the delinquent Rajah, and, it is reported and believed, armed with full authority to carry his views into effect. On arriving in India he recorded his intentions, and lost no time in seeking to fulfil them. He required nothing from the Rajah but that he should adhere to engagements concluded many years before, and the Rajah virtually renounced those engagements. The new governor of Bombay, it is to be observed,

trated in the collection of papers on the subject, printed in conformity with a resolution of the Proprietors of East India Stock. Among other disbursements of this description was one, about 65,000 rupees, for the purchase of a ship, for the purpose, it was said, of keeping open a communication with England, but which ship, strangely enough, was employed in trading with China. How the Rajah imagined his interests were to be promoted by such employment of the ship, it is impossible to guess; but he appears to have been aware of the fact, for he assured Sir James Carnac, with much gravity, that the sending her to China was "with no hostile intent."

stood alone in India, in maintaining that the Rajah had not offended beyond the reach of forgiveness, free, generous, and full. His position, in this respect, is thus described by himself:—"When, therefore, I became an advocate for a lenient course being adopted towards the Rajah, I was opposed to the opinions of the following high authorities: first, by the entire government of the late Sir Robert Grant, whose sentiments were adhered to by the government of my immediate predecessor, my present respected colleague, Mr. Farish: secondly, by the right honourable the governor-general of India, and this is the more important, because, in the first instance his lordship was disposed to view the Rajah of Sattara's conduct, as I did, as beneath serious notice, but was ultimately constrained to change this view by the irresistible weight of the evidence adduced against him: thirdly, by all the members composing the government of India. These high authorities* agreed in opinion that the charges were undeniably proved, and, although some variations are observable in their sentiments in regard to the precise mode in which the case should be finally disposed of, all concurred in thinking that the

* About the time of Sir James Carnac's arrival at Bombay, a letter was received at that presidency from the secretary to the government of India, transmitting copies of minutes of the latter government on the Sattara case, all concurring in the conclusion that the Rajah's guilt had been established, and that his offences were of so grave and serious a nature as to render his deposition and the annexation of his dominions to the British empire highly expedient and necessary, as an example to the whole of India.

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Rajah's transgressions were too heinous to admit of their being overlooked and forgiven. I particularly notice these facts, for, although I do not apprehend that any one will doubt my sincerity, they are of themselves an ample guarantee that I must have earnestly and conscientiously endeavoured to succeed in my exertions on the Rajah's behalf, and that the failure, and his consequent downfal, are solely to be attributed to his own infatuation and perverse obstinacy, and to the pernicious counsels of interested and designing men."* Against all these authorities the new governor of Bombay had to maintain his own conviction, aided, as it is believed, by the warrant of the home authorities. He did maintain it, and was vanquished only by the perverseness of the man whom he was so anxious to protect.† The Rajah was, indeed, to a certain ex-

* Minute, 4th September, 1839.

† It was alleged that the Rajah was the victim of a conspiracy, but his real character and views had long been known to those who had possessed opportunities of observing them. Sir James Carnac, in the minute already quoted, says:—"I could adduce proof upon proof of the Rajah's ambition, and of the fact of his restlessness of intrigue being not unknown many years ago to the residents stationed at his court, which is conclusive against the supposition that the charges that have been under inquiry during the last three years are the fruit of an intrigue of the day against him. One more, however, will suffice. In a letter dated the 1st February, 1838, Colonel Ovans observes, Colonel Briggs, in his report to government dated the 1st January, 1827, refers to the ambitious feeling as likely to be the Rajah's ruin, in these remarkable and prophetic words:—'He is, however, tenacious of his prerogative, and will every day more and more resist our control. He has lately been flattered by those around him into an erroneous

tent misled by others, but his advisers did but minister to the evil dispositions of his own heart. His native advisers were labouring in their ordinary vocation—a very common one in Asia—that of practising on the weakness and credulity of the wealthy, in the hope of deriving advantage from their misguided bounty. But of the conduct of those Europeans, who excited hopes which they knew could not be gratified, and fostered feelings of enmity to the country of their birth, it is impossible to speak in terms of adequate severity. Happily, it is unnecessary to seek for fitting language—the indignant contempt which all honest minds must feel for such conduct will spring forth without a prompter.

We pass from the fortunes of a petty prince—the feeble representative of a robber dynasty, which rose from obscurity to grandeur, and then declined into insignificance with meteoric rapidity—to events of greater dignity and greater interest; events important in themselves and in their widely extended relations. To render the narrative intelligible, some

estimate of his own importance, and he has already evinced strong inclinations to extend his connections beyond the limits prescribed by treaty. It will be fortunate, perhaps, for his highness, if events afford the government an early opportunity to give him timely warning of the danger he is incurring, or I should be very apprehensive that he may succeed in involving himself in secret communications with those who may at some future period provoke the resentment of government, when it is likely a development of a system of intrigue with his highness may take place, which will altogether shake our confidence, and may lead to his ultimate ruin.' "

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reference to treaties and negotiations of earlier date will be requisite.

The safety of British India on the westward had frequently been an object of great anxiety to its rulers. The countries intervening between Persia and the Indus were inhabited by a rude and barbarous but withal a warlike population, well calculated by their predatory habits, their poverty, and their recklessness to excite the alarm of a comparatively opulent neighbour. India had more than once felt the evils of their visitations, and the Affghans were remembered as men whose trade was war, and whose constant divisions formed the only effectual check on their ambition and military taste. Some years before the termination of the eighteenth century, an Affghan chief, named Zemaun Shah, had begun to threaten the British frontier, and those threats were periodically repeated and withdrawn as circumstances dictated. The attention of the Marquis Wellesley was directed to this source of danger at an early period of the administration of that distinguished nobleman; and an attempt to invade India, which might have occasioned much both of trouble and expense, if nothing more, was foiled by exciting the alarm of Zemaun Shah for the safety of his own dominions. At this time danger to British India was apprehended from the machinations of the French; and to avert evil from either quarter, it was deemed desirable to draw Persia into a close alliance with the British government. This was effected. In 1801 a treaty was negotiated by Sir John Malcolm,

by which the Persian Shah engaged to exclude the French from settling in any part of his dominions, and to hold the Affghans in check in the event of their attempting to invade India.

The latter cause for apprehension was soon removed. Zemaun Shah was deposed, and, according to Asiatic custom, blinded, in the year in which the treaty with Persia was concluded, Zemaun Shah having treated in the same manner his elder brother, Hoomayon, whose throne he had usurped. The conqueror of Zemaun Shah, and author of his sufferings, was another brother, named Mahmood, who speedily found himself engaged in a contest for the throne with a fourth brother, named Shoojah-ool-Moolk, who finally triumphed; but, with unusual clemency, abstained from inflicting on the man whom he had vanquished the penalty of blindness. The country, however, continued torn by factions and divisions, and Shoojah-ool-Moolk tottered on his throne from the moment that he ascended it.

While Affghanistan was thus ceasing to be formidable, Persia was relaxing in her fidelity, and, finally, even the affectation of good faith was abandoned. The Persian sovereign, in 1806, sent a mission to Napoleon, then in the zenith of his power, and with all Europe, England excepted, prostrate at his feet. Two years afterwards a French mission arrived in Persia, with the avowed object of establishing such relations with that country as might aid the views which Napoleon had long

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cherished, of striking a blow at the British power in India, and it was received with extraordinary marks of favour and distinction. Lord Minto, a watchful and excellent guardian of the great interests committed to his charge, thereupon prepared to counteract the designs of the French Emperor. The alliance of Persia had previously been sought to check Affghanistan, and oppose a barrier to France. A similar connection with Affghanistan was now meditated in order to oppose the combined efforts of France and Persia. Prudent in his policy, Lord Minto was also happy in the choice of an instrument for carrying it into effect. It was resolved to despatch a mission to Cabool, and the charge of it was intrusted to the Honourable Mountstuart Elphinstone, then a very young man, but since eminently distinguished by many important services.* Mr. Elphinstone was cordially received, and concluded a treaty with Shoojah-ool-Moolk, by which that prince bound himself to resist any attempts which might be made by the French and Persians to advance through his territories upon India.

While preparation was thus made to vanquish the enemy in Affghanistan, should they approach, measures to break the confederacy were not neglected. Endeavours were made, both from India and from home, to counteract the baleful influence which the French had acquired in Persia, and to detach that country from its inauspicious connection with Eng-

* As resident with the Peishwa, governor of Bombay, &c.

land's bitter and irreconcilable foe. Sir John Malcolm arrived at Bushire, commissioned by the governor-general of India, almost simultaneously with the arrival of Sir Harford Jones* in Persia, as plenipotentiary direct from the British Crown. The former met with an uncourteous reception, was refused permission to proceed to the capital, and directed to communicate with inferior authorities. With this he declined to comply, and having remonstrated without success, he returned to Calcutta without effecting any thing, or enjoying an opportunity of effecting any thing. Sir Harford Jones met with better fortune. He advanced to Tehran, and entered into negotiations which terminated in the conclusion of a preliminary treaty, by which the Persian monarch declared all treaties and agreements which he had previously made with any of the powers of Europe null and void from the date of the articles then concluded; and that he would not permit any European force to pass through his country towards India. In the event of Persia being invaded by any European power, Great Britain was to furnish a military force, or, in lieu thereof, "a subsidy, with warlike ammunitions, such as guns, muskets, &c., and officers to the amount that may be to the advantage of both parties, for the expulsion of the force invading." The number of the forces to be furnished, or the amount of the subsidy and contribution of ammunition, were to be regulated by the definitive treaty to which that under notice was preliminary.

* Now Sir Harford Jones Bridges.

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One immediate effect of the conclusion of the treaty was the dismissal of the French mission. A treaty based on this preliminary arrangement was subsequently entered into by Sir Gore Ouseley, but, the British government requiring certain changes, the treaty actually deserving the name of definitive was not concluded till November, 1814, when it received the signatures of Mr. Mörier and Mr. Ellis, on the part of Great Britain.* In this treaty the renunciation of European alliances was somewhat modified, being confined to nations in a state of hostility with Great Britain. No individuals of such European nations entertaining a design of invading India, or being at enmity with Great Britain, were to be permitted to enter Persia; and if any European power should seek to invade India by way of Khorasan, Tataristan, Bokhara, Samarcand, or other routes, the King of Persia was, to the extent of his power, to engage the kings and governors of those countries to oppose such invasion, "either by the fear of his armies or by conciliatory measures." The King of Great Britain was not to interfere in disputes between the princes, nobles, and chiefs of Persia; and it was further considerately provided that, "if one of the contending parties should ever offer a province of Persia, with a view of obtaining assist-

* The poetical commencement of this treaty affords a perfect specimen of Persian taste in the construction of state papers:

"These happy leaves are a nosegay plucked from the thornless garden of concord, and tied by the hands of the plenipotentiaries of the two great states in the form of a definitive treaty, in which the articles of friendship and amity are blended."

ance, the English government shall not agree to such a proposal, nor, by adopting it, possess themselves of such part of Persia." It was laid down that the purpose of the treaty was strictly defensive—that it was concluded only for the purpose of repelling aggression—and that the word "aggression" was to mean an attack upon the territories of another state. This, with reference to the relative situation of Russia and Persia, formed a very proper introduction to the mention of the former country, and the mode of determining the respective limits of the two. This it was prescribed should be effected "according to the admission of Great Britain, Persia, and Russia." The amount of subsidy to be paid to Persia, if invaded from Europe, was fixed at two hundred thousand tomauns annually; but it was not to be paid if the war were provoked by any aggression on the part of Persia; and, as it was granted solely for military purposes, the English minister was to be satisfied of its being duly applied. The Persian government was to be at liberty to employ European officers to discipline its troops, provided such officers did not belong to nations at war or enmity with Great Britain. If any European power should be engaged in war with Persia while at peace with England, the latter state was to endeavour to establish a friendly understanding between the belligerents; but if unsuccessful, was to assist Persia with troops or money, in conformity with the preceding articles, for so long a time as that country should continue at war. The subsidy was to be paid early,

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to enable the party entitled to receive it to adhere to what was stated to be "the custom of Persia," the practice of paying the troops six months in advance—a custom the prudence of which in general cases may be questioned, though its liberality cannot be denied, but which certainly differs widely from the ordinary custom of Asiatic states, that being, not to pay their troops "six months in advance," but to suffer the pay to remain many months in arrear. The treaty contained two articles relating to Affghanistan. By one, the Persian sovereign engaged to send an army against the Affghans, should that people be at war with the British government, the expense to be defrayed by that government—the extent of assistance, mode of affording it, and manner of payment, to be arranged when the occasion might arise. By the other article, the British were restrained from interfering in the case of war between the Affghans and Persians, except their mediation should be solicited by both parties. Further, it was stipulated that, if any "Persian subject of distinction, shewing signs of hostility and rebellion, should take refuge in the British dominions, the English government, on receiving an intimation from that of Persia, should (in the nervous language of the treaty) "turn him out" of the country, and if he should refuse to leave it, arrest and send him to Persia. If, previously to the arrival of the fugitive, the British government should be aware of the wish of the Persian authorities that the stranger should not be received, his entrance was to be prohibited, and if the

prohibition were disregarded, the penalty denounced against disobedience in the former case was to be incurred. The obligations of this article were declared to be reciprocal. In the last place came an article providing that the British government should assist Persia with ships and troops in the Gulf, if required, and if convenient and practicable; the expenses of such ships and troops being defrayed by Persia, and the ships being restricted to certain ports, to be specified, for their anchorage. Such was the treaty which, after five years of negotiation, was concluded. It remained in force, without alteration, till 1828, when the court of Persia found itself in the condition not uncommon with Oriental states, pressed by demands which it knew not how to meet, and ready to sacrifice prospective advantage for present relief. Persia had been engaged in a disastrous war with Russia, and had been amerced by the latter power in a heavy fine. The British government had felt inconvenience from the article of the treaty by which they were bound to afford military or pecuniary aid to Persia when engaged in war, and this appeared a fitting opportunity to get rid of it. An overture for that purpose was made, and the Persian prince, in consideration of receiving a sum of money to aid in discharging the claim of Russia, reluctantly consented to annul the fourth article of the treaty under which the obligation of the British government arose, as well as the preceding article which related to the boundaries of Russia and Persia, and gave Great Britain a voice in determining them.

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A few years more rolled on, during which Persia became gradually weaker, and Russia gained a proportionate increase of strength. Indeed, the rise and extension of the Russian empire are among the most remarkable facts of modern times, or even of any time. The foundations of that empire were laid by Peter the Great as late as the conclusion of the seventeenth century. Before this time Muscovy was a petty princedom, obscure as it was barbarous, and not recognized as a member of the community of civilized and Christian states in the west. Since that period, the course of the Muscovite power has been, with occasional interruptions, a career of aggression and conquest. The Czar Peter was a man of extraordinary energy, and as unscrupulous as he was energetic. In every direction he sought the means of extending his territory, wealth, and power. Of his wars with Sweden and Turkey it is foreign to the purpose of this work to speak; but his designs upon Persia and eventually upon the trade of India—for beyond the possession of its trade even the sanguine mind of the Czar could at that period hardly have speculated—require some notice. Peter sent an embassy to Persia, and secured a monopoly of the export of silk from that country. The Persian dominions were then falling into ruin under an imbecile ruler, and Peter thought the opportunity favourable for obtaining territorial as well as commercial advantages. Under the pretence of assisting the Shah against some rebel subjects, he entered the country, seized some of its most desirable districts,

and retained possession in spite of the attempts of the Persians to regain them. Having achieved this measure of success, he returned in triumph to Moscow. The Sultan of Persia was now a prisoner in the hands of the Affghans. Peter undertook to relieve him, and, in consideration of this service, obtained a formal cession of the provinces which he had conquered, as well as of several others. The treaty was not ratified by the sovereign of Persia, but Peter, notwithstanding, held it good so far as it gave him a title to keep possession of the provinces thereby ceded to him, though he entirely passed over that portion of the treaty which imposed on him, as the consideration for what he gained, the duty of rescuing the Shah from the hands of his enemies. The situation of Persia was now wretched in the extreme. The Affghans were in possession of one portion, the Russians of another, and the Turks of a third, when Peter died. But this event brought no change to the fortunes of the unhappy country, for after his death the Russian and Turkish governments proceeded coolly to settle the boundaries of their own dominions, as well as of those of the Persian monarch, without calling the last-named power to any part in the discussion or decision of the matter.

The next step taken by Russia was remarkable. The rulers of that country had been unable to establish their authority in certain provinces which they claimed under the treaty which the Shah had disavowed. They now transferred their right to those provinces, such as it was, to the head of the Affghan

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invaders whom the Russians were bound to expel, and as the condition of the territorial cession made to them, and in consideration of the sacrifice, if it can be so called, they obtained the concurrence of the Affghans in their retention of the remainder. But the designs of Russia soon afterwards received a considerable check. Nadar Shah arose, expelled the Affghans from Persia, and became its monarch. He claimed the whole of the ancient possessions of Persia, and Russia, not deeming it prudent to contest his claim, quietly abandoned all territory south of the Caucasus. But a dominion which rests on the personal character of the sovereign is necessarily unstable, and the death of Nadar Shah opened again the field for the exercise of Russian ambition. Rival princes of Georgia, an old dependency of Persia, sought the assistance of Russia, and though none was afforded, a series of proceedings of singularly insidious character followed, which ultimately led to the absorption of that province into the leviathan empire. The success of Russia against Turkey enabled her to command the Caspian Sea; this afforded additional means for fulfilling the designs long entertained against Persia; and those who have learned with what perseverance Russia pursues its schemes of aggression will believe that they were not neglected.

The eighteenth century closed upon the publication of an ukase of the sovereign of Russia,* formally annexing to his empire the province of

* The lunatic Emperor Paul.

Georgia, which had been for some time under the protection of his predecessors. The spirit which animated the Russian government when that protection was first afforded—which indeed has never ceased to animate it, and never will cease till the unwieldy fabric of the empire shall fall to pieces—was evinced in the instructions given to the officer by whom the province was brought under the yoke.* Unlimited authority was given to him to receive the submission of any nations that might desire to become subject to Russia, and certain countries were named† as peculiarly fit to be admitted to this privilege, which countries, like Georgia, were dependencies of Persia. The annexation of Georgia, by the Emperor Paul, was in defiance of a settlement of the crown of that country solemnly made by his immediate predecessor, the Empress Catharine.‡ But a scrupulous regard to obligations, however stringent, has never been numbered among the weaknesses of Russian rulers; and an imperial ukase is held to be able to effect any thing within the limits of physical possibility. Moral considerations enter not into the calculations of the statesmen who wield the semi-barbarous power of Russia. Paul soon afterwards met his death—in the manner common to his race.§ His

* Prince Potemkin.

† Badkoo and Derbend.

‡ By the treaty which brought Georgia under the protection of Russia, the Empress stipulated for herself and her successors that she would maintain the reigning prince, his heirs and posterity, on the throne.

§ That a Russian prince should die a natural death might by the superstitious be regarded as an alarming portent.

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successor, Alexander, confirmed the Georgian ukase, and proceeded in an amiable spirit of filial piety to carry out the views of his parent, by adding Mingrelia to the imperial possessions.

The Russians and Persians were soon to come into actual conflict, but it was not the long series of aggression already noted which was the immediate occasion of it. The conflict could not fail to come sooner or later, but it was precipitated by the conduct of a rebellious vassal of the Persian King, who held the government of Erivan. The Shah advancing with an army to reduce this person to obedience, the latter solicited the aid of a Russian force, which was promptly afforded him. At this time, it is to be observed, Russia and Persia were at peace; but this circumstance formed no impediment to the grant of the required assistance, seeing that it was attended by the prospect of aggrandizement, the rebel having promised to deliver up to the Russians the fortress which he commanded. Before arriving at Erivan, the Russian army met and defeated that of the Shah; but on reaching the place, the surrender of which was looked to as the fruit of their victory, it was found that from some cause the rebel governor had altered his mind. He refused to admit the friends whose visit he had solicited, and they, being unable to maintain the siege, were compelled to retire. This was in 1804, and the war thus commenced by the Russians, without any provocation but the lust of conquest, continued to be carried on in a desultory manner and with variable success till

1814. It was during its continuance that the diplomatic contest for the friendship of Persia took place between the English and French, and ended in the triumph of the latter. These ten years of sluggish war in the East were productive of great events in Europe: Napoleon, having brought to his feet every European power but one, gave law to the entire continent. Could he have been satisfied with what he had attained,—enough it might have been supposed to satisfy any measure of ambition, he might have died in possession of the vast power which his sword had won, and have transmitted it to a successor of his own race. But it was not sufficient that Spain should be a dependent kingdom unless its nominal ruler were of the family of its actual sovereign, and to effect this, Napoleon resorted to a paltry stratagem, the perpetration of which was not only a great crime, but, according to the code of political morality then prevalent in France, that which is much worse, a great blunder. The treacherous abduction of the royal family of Spain, the attempt to force the brother of Napoleon on the people, the resistance called forth, the aid afforded by Great Britain, and the brilliant results which followed, shook the new imperial throne to its foundations; and to crown all, Napoleon, in an evil hour for himself, projected the invasion of Russia. The terrible details of the failure of that attempt need not here be repeated. Napoleon, bereft of one of the finest armies ever collected, fled towards the seat of his government, which a few months before he had

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quitted with burning expectations of fresh victories and further conquests. He had marched to Russia through the territories of obsequious friends and dependents. He found that his return was to be made through the country of enemies. All Europe was now arrayed against him. He was hunted homeward like a common foe of mankind, and though on some occasions he made a stand worthy of his military reputation, victory, when it attended him, was but the prelude to retreat. At length he entered France, and so did his pursuers, and in that capital where he had defied all earthly—perhaps it would not be too much to add all heavenly power—he divested himself of that crown which he a few years before had compelled the reluctant representative of the once mighty, but now fallen, Romish hierarchy to place upon his head. It is needless to follow him through the few months of feverish excitement which followed, or the years of comparative solitude which he subsequently passed on a remote rock in the Southern Ocean. Napoleon has no claim to notice here, except in as far as the wars which he kindled in Europe withdrew the attention of Russia from any vigorous prosecution of her designs upon Persia. These wars account for the feeble, lingering, and indecisive character of her measures in advancing those designs, and the restoration of general peace accounts for the suspension of them. The course of European politics had brought Great Britain into close alliance with Russia, and on this ground, as well as, it may be

presumed, from a desire to prevent the addition to the Russian empire of the whole dominions of Persia, the British ambassador in the latter country interposed his good offices to establish the relations of peace. It was indeed an extraordinary fact, that Great Britain should be subsidizing an ally for the purpose of maintaining war with another ally of the country furnishing the subsidy. By the treaty thus brought about, Persia surrendered to Russia a vast extent of territory, and engaged to maintain no navy on the Caspian. The conduct of the negotiation was highly characteristic of Russian policy. The basis proposed in the treaty was that known in diplomatic language as the "uti possidetis." This would have given to the Russians the right to a district which for special reasons the Persian government were most anxious to rescue from their grasp. The Persian plenipotentiary accordingly declined to accept the basis unless Talish were excepted. The Russian negotiator declared that his instructions did not allow him to vary or modify the basis; but to induce the other party to accept of it without qualification, he promised to procure from his court the restitution of the disputed district as an act of grace and favour. The bait was taken, the treaty was signed,—the Persian government then looked for the fulfilment of the Russian plenipotentiary's promise, but it is needless to say that they looked in vain. The British ambassador at St. Petersburgh remonstrated; his remonstrances produced all the effect that might be expected, and no more.

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From this time an uneasy state of feeling continued to exist between Russia and Persia, until, after the lapse of some years, it terminated in open war, a war most disastrous to Persia—that country being compelled to purchase peace by the sacrifice of further portions of territory to a great extent. Having gained thus much by war, the Russian government, according to its accustomed mode, resorted to the use of the more insidious and not less efficient modes of aggrandizement afforded by the arts of intrigue. The advances of Russia have ever been like those of the tiger—wary, crouching, and cowardly, until the moment arrives for making the fatal spring. With peace and friendship on the lips of her emissaries and bland smiles on their countenances, Russia has succeeded but too often in disarming apprehension and discouraging precaution, until the obvious certainty of her objects left no place for apprehension, and precaution was no longer availing. Having laid down her arms for a season, every effort was made to establish the influence of Russia within Persia and beyond it, and her counsels were not less fatal than her sword.

Those counsels became an object of alarm to Great Britain, and most justly. Imbecile or traitorous must be that government which slumbers when Russia is approaching the border of any of its provinces, even though the approach be slow, and the distance between the invader and the object of his desire, as yet, great. Who that had seen the Russian empire as left by Peter the First could

have anticipated its present extent? Who could have imagined that, after being deprived of the talent and energy of its founder, it should yet continue to roll on increasing with every variation of political events, and spreading its baleful influence even where its actual power was still unfelt? A writer who has bestowed much attention on the subject thus speaks of Russia, and the effects of its ambition:—

"A reference to the map will shew that Russia has advanced her frontier in every direction, and even the Caspian Sea, which appeared to present an impediment to her progress, she has turned to advantage by appropriating it to herself. It will be seen that the plains of Tartary have excited her cupidity, while the civilized states of Europe and Asia have been dismembered to augment her dominions. Not content with this, she has crossed into America, and there disputes, in direct violation of her engagements to England, the right of our merchants to navigate the rivers that debouche on its western coast. It will be seen that the acquisitions she has made from Sweden are greater than what remains of that ancient kingdom; that her acquisitions from Poland are as large as the whole Austrian empire; that the territory she has wrested from Turkey in Europe is equal to the dominions of Prussia, exclusive of her Rhenish provinces; and that her acquisitions from Turkey in Asia are equal in extent to all the smaller states of Germany, the Rhenish provinces of Prussia, Belgium, and Holland, taken together; that the country she has conquered

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from Persia is about the size of England; that her acquisitions in Tartary have an area equal to Turkey in Europe, Greece, Italy, and Spain; and that the territory she has acquired within the last sixty-four years (since 1772) is greater in extent and importance than the whole empire she had in Europe before that time. These are facts," continues the same writer, "which rest on no doubtful evidence, yet they are such as may well startle every thinking man who has not previously reflected upon them, and such as no one who desires to reason on the present state of Europe or Asia ought to disregard. Every portion of these vast acquisitions, except perhaps that in Tartary, has been obtained in opposition to the views, the wishes, and the interests of England. The dismemberment of Sweden, the partition of Poland, the conquest of the Turkish provinces and of those dissevered from Persia, have all been injurious to British interests; and though some of them found favour for a time, and for a price given at Vienna and Berlin, even the kingdoms that have shared her spoliations can now regard them with no other feeling than alarm. The power and resources of Russia lie in the countries to the west of the Volga, not in the wilds of Siberia, and her empire in Europe has been nearly doubled in little more than half a century. In sixty-four years she has advanced her frontier eight hundred and fifty miles towards Vienna, Berlin, Dresden, Munich, and Paris; she has approached four hundred and fifty miles nearer to Constantinople; she has

possessed herself of the capital of Poland, and has advanced to within a few miles of the capital of Sweden, from which, when Peter the First mounted the throne, her frontier was distant three hundred miles. Since that time she has stretched herself forward about one thousand miles towards India and the same distance towards the capital of Persia. The regiment that is now stationed at her farthest frontier post, on the western shore of the Caspian, has as great a distance to march back to Moscow as onward to Attock on the Indus, and is actually farther from St. Petersburgh than from Lahore, the capital of the Seiks. The battalions of the Russian imperial guard that invaded Persia found, at the termination of the war, that they were as near to Herat as to the banks of the Don, that they had already accomplished half the distance from their capital to Delhi, and that therefore from their camp in Persia they had as great a distance to march back to St. Petersburgh as onward to the capital of Hindostan. Meanwhile, the 'Moscow Gazette' threatens to dictate at Calcutta the next peace with England, and Russia never ceases to urge the Persian government to accept from it, free of all cost, officers to discipline its troops, and arms and artillery for its soldiers, at the same time that her own battalions are ready to march into Persia whenever the Shah, to whom their services are freely offered, can be induced to require their assistance."*

* "Progress and Present Position of Russia in the East." Second edition, 8vo., 1838, pp. 142—144.

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This is a true picture of the progress and policy of Russia, and no country can view with indifference the advance of the frontier of that nation to its own. Apart from the interests of any particular people, the overgrown tyranny of Russia must be regarded as inimical to the best interests of the human race. When Rome gradually advanced its conquests till its power overshadowed the larger part of the known world, the position of the conquered was not one of unmixed evil. It is true that nations lost independence, and princes crowns, but the conquerors were for the most part far more enlightened and civilized than those whom they subdued; and in communicating to their tributary provinces a portion of the advantages enjoyed by themselves, they made some compensation for the evils which they inflicted. When the barbarian hordes of the north overran the fair provinces which the trembling sceptre of Rome was no longer able to control, the irruption was attended with circumstances which relieve the picture of some of its darker shades. The idolatrous victors embraced the purer religion of the people whom they despoiled, and laid the foundations of a state of society which has rivalled the brighter days of Roman grandeur, and far surpassed those of its decline. But the inroads of Russia are destitute of any countervailing good to check the mass of evil with which they are attended. The Russians bestow on their victims nothing but chains, and receive from them nothing but the ordinary rewards of tyranny and injustice—the

smothered hate which chains only can keep from bursting into open hostility. The progress of Russian domination or influence is the progress of barbarism. The wide-spreading tyranny of Napoleon was as unfavourable to moral and intellectual elevation as to civil freedom; but it would be gross injustice to compare it with that of Russia. The French possessed literature, and were proud of it; and if the fine arts had not flourished with them, it was, at least, not for want of cultivation. France, too, had some recollections calculated to soften the madness of revolutionary anarchy and gild the shackles of imperial despotism. While the remembrance of her ancient chivalry endured, France had something to remind her whence she had fallen, and to warn her to retrace her steps. Russia has no recollections but of dungeons and whips—of public outrage and secret crime. Its common people have ever been the basest of slaves, and its palaces the abodes of sanguinary violence and unblushing licentiousness. Russia has no literature; and though its rulers have long sought to attach men of science to their chariot-wheels, it has been only that they might use them as instruments to rivet more closely the fetters of tyranny. Where Russian aggression is triumphant, the result is something more than a mere change of government—it is a reduction of the unhappy people who fall beneath its yoke to the lowest state of degradation in which man can exist.

To what extent the incubus of Russian supremacy is destined to overspread the civilized world it

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is not possible to calculate; but all sagacious and prudent statesmen will watch its movements with the deepest anxiety. At the time under notice, the Persian government was altogether in the hands of that of Russia, and the intrigues of the latter to extend its influence beyond Persia, in the direction of India, were notorious. Some brief explanation of the circumstances of the intervening country will here be necessary.

Mention has been made of a prince named Shoojah-ool-Moolk as having succeeded, in opposition to his brother, Mahmood, in establishing himself on the throne of Affghanistan, and who ruled, or professed to rule, that country when it was visited by the British mission under Mr. Elphinstone. Shortly after the departure of that mission, Shoojah was compelled to yield to the better fortune of Mahmood, who escaped from confinement, and asserted his claim in arms. The defeated Shoojah fled to Lahore, where Runjeet Singh received him cordially, plundered him unscrupulously, and evinced a strong desire to retain possession of his person. Shoojah, after a time, escaped into the British dominions, where he was received in a manner becoming the character of the government.

But Mahmood was not to enjoy without molestation the throne which he had regained, or rather which had been regained for him. He mainly owed his success to a chief named Futteh Khan, of whom, on account probably of the services which he had rendered, Kamram the son of Mahmood, a

man of dark and cruel character, became jealous. The vindictive prince recommended that Futteh Khan should be arrested and deprived of sight. Mahmood, with the measure of gratitude common to Oriental despots, complied with his son's request. The chief was subjected to the infliction suggested, and subsequently was murdered with circumstances of atrocious cruelty. Such occurrences are frequent in the East, but though frequent, they arouse the natural feelings of human nature, and those by whom they are perpetrated often find that they have prepared a severe, perhaps a bloody, retribution for themselves. Futteh Khan left behind those who were not slow to avenge his death; who probably, indeed, were glad of a pretext for shaking off their allegiance to an ungrateful lord. A revolution, effected by the brothers of the murdered minister, deprived Mahmood of the larger portion of his dominions, and drove him to Herat, where he succeeded in maintaining his authority over a limited extent of territory. There he died, leaving his diminished power to his heir, Kamram, the guilty author of the sufferings and death of Futteh Khan, and the subsequent ill-fortune which attended the house and throne of Mahmood. The dominions alienated by the revolution were divided among the brothers of Futteh Khan, one of whom, Dost Mahomed Khan, the most able and active among them, reigned in Kabool. A part of the country was held in a sort of common sovereignty by other brothers residing at Kandahar. Shah Shoojah, twice, unsuc-

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cessfully attempted to recover the throne from which Mahmood had been expelled; but Runjeet Singh succeeded in wresting Peshawur from the grasp of the rebel chiefs, and annexing it to his own dominions.

This dismemberment was not the only one to be apprehended. Persia, encouraged by Russia, preferred certain claims, and prepared to maintain them. The nature and even the extent of these claims were somewhat vague. They seem to have rested partly on pretensions originating in the conquests of Nadar Shah, partly on the payment of tribute to Persia on certain occasions by Kamram, the ruler of Herat, and partly on certain engagements entered into by that prince while the prince-royal of Persia had been employed in reducing Khorasan to obedience. Upon these latter grounds the Persian claims would have been limited to Herat and its dependencies, but according to the first they extended to Kandahar and Ghuznee. With reference to the dependency of Persia upon Russia, it was obviously not for the interest of Great Britain that these claims should be pressed to any, even the smallest, extent. The danger is clearly stated in a memorandum drawn up in the month of January, 1836, by Mr. Ellis, the British minister in Persia, for the information of his government:—"The Shah of Persia lays claim to the sovereignty of Affghanistan, as far as Ghuznee, and is fully determined to attempt the conquest of Herat in the spring. Unfortunately, the conduct of

Kamram Meerza, in violating the engagements entered into with his royal highness the late Abbas Meerza, and in permitting his Vizier, Yah-Mahomed Khan, to occupy part of Seistan, has given the Shah a full justification for commencing hostilities. The success of the Shah in the undertaking is anxiously wished for by Russia, and their minister here does not fail to press it on to early execution. The motive cannot be mistaken. Herat once annexed to Persia may become, according to the commercial treaty, the residence of a Russian consular agent, who would from thence push his researches and communications, avowed and secret, throughout Affghanistan. Indeed, in the present state of the relations between Persia and Russia, it cannot be denied that the progress of the former in Affghanistan is tantamount to the advance of the latter, and ought to receive every opposition from the British government that the obligations of public faith will permit; but while the British government is free to assist Persia in the assertion of her sovereign pretensions in Affghanistan, Great Britain is precluded by the ninth article of the existing treaty from interfering between the Persians and the Affghans, unless called upon to do so by both parties; and, therefore, as long as the treaty remains in force, the British government must submit to the approach of Russian influence, through the instrumentality of Persian conquests, to the very frontier of our Indian empire."* War between Persia and

* Correspondence relating to Persia and Affghanistan presented to both Houses of Parliament by command of her Majesty.

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Herat followed, under the auspices of Russia, and the anxiety of the British authorities was consequently increased. Russia, indeed, affected to disclaim the share imputed to it in originating the war, and copies of despatches from the Russian minister in Persia to his government were furnished to discredit the report. But despatches are framed with various objects:—There are despatches framed to inform, and despatches framed to mislead; despatches to be kept secret, and despatches to be publicly paraded. Russian diplomatists are adepts in all the mysteries of their craft, creditable and otherwise; and, in all cases in which their statements are questionable, it will be the safer course to judge of the truth from circumstances. In this case circumstances sufficiently indicated what were the views of the Russian government. While its ministers were manufacturing show despatches to disarm the jealousy of England, they were not only inciting Persia to war with Herat, but actually engaging in the contest and aiding its prolongation by advances of money.

To counteract these efforts became a matter of pressing importance, and the practicability of converting eastern Affghanistan into a barrier for the defence of British India—a project previously entertained by Lord Minto—began to be seriously considered. With a view of effecting this object, or at least of ascertaining whether or not it could be effected, a mission, professedly commercial, was in September, 1837, dispatched from India under Captain Alexander Burnes, who had some previous

acquaintance with the country and its rulers. When Captain Burnes arrived at Kabool, in the exercise of his functions, he found Persian and Russian intrigue actively at work in Affghanistan. Communications were passing between Kandahar and Persia, and further, between the chiefs of the former place and the Russian ambassador at the Persian court. These latter communications, it is said, originated with a fugitive from Herat, who, at Tehran, became the guest of the Russian ambassador. This person possessing some influence with the Kandahar chiefs, suggested to them that it would be for their advantage to address the representative of the autocrat. It is stated, that they did to the effect of expressing a strong desire to enter into a friendly connection with Russia; of representing their grievances, more especially the occupation of Peshawur by Runjeet Singh, and of soliciting pecuniary assistance to enable them to expel the invader. It is needless to say, that the ambassador did not afford them the required aid, but he expressed great joy at the receipt of the communication, treated the messenger who brought it with extraordinary distinction, and dispatched a courteous answer with the usual Oriental accompaniment of presents. The epistolary favours of the Russian ambassador* were not confined to Kandahar. He addressed a letter to Dost Mahomed Khan, the chief of Kabool, and this appears to have been unsolicited.† Dost Mahomed

* The title of this indefatigable functionary was the Count Simonich.

† Dost Mahomed had some time before dispatched a messenger to Russia by way of Bokhara.

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had sent a messenger to the Shah of Persia, for the purpose, as it appears, of asking assistance against Runjeet Singh, whose occupation of Peshawur was, by all the brothers, regarded with extreme aversion. It does not seem that any overture was made to the Russian ambassador, but this did not prevent that personage from expressing his sympathy with Dost Mahomed. "The Russian ambassador, who is always with the Shah," writes the servant of the chief of Kabool, "has sent you a letter, which I inclose. The substance of his verbal message to you is, that if the Shah does every thing you want, so much the better; and, if not, the Russian government will furnish you with every thing wanting. The object of the Russian elchee* by this message is, to have a road to the English, and for this they are very anxious. He is waiting for your answer, and I am sure he will serve you."† The road to the English which the Russians wished to have was, of course, a road to India. True it is, that this is only a representation of the views of Russia at second hand; but for what object did the ambassador of that country, who was "always with the Shah," seek intercourse with the chiefs of Affghanistan? The object of the British government was obvious and was fair. They sought to establish political influence in that country for the purpose of protecting their Indian possessions. But Russia had no similar object, and could have none.

* Envoy.

† Correspondence relating to Affghanistan laid before Parliament. No. 6.

No one apprehended that the English ever entertained any design of invading Russia from India through Affghanistan and Persia. The objects of the two governments who were thus contending for influence were altogether different; with one it was defence, with the other aggression.

A new agent soon appeared in the field, in the person of a Russian emissary,* who came to Kabool armed with credentials from the Count Simonich, the Russian ambassador at Tehran, and recommended by a letter from the Shah. The communications made by this person were justly characterized by Captain Burnes, to whom they were reported from two distinct but trustworthy sources, as "of a startling nature." He informed the chieftain, at whose court he appeared, that he was commissioned to express the sincere sympathy of the Russian government with the difficulties under which Dost Mahomed laboured; that they were willing to assist in repelling Runjeet Singh, would furnish a sum of money for the purpose, and renew it annually, expecting in return the chieftain's good offices. Even the means of remittance were adverted to, the Russian government undertaking to convey the treasure to Bokhara, whence Dost Mahomed was expected to find his own means of transit.† It is

* The name of this person was Vickovich.

† According to a statement made by one of the Sirdars of Kandahar to an English officer, Captain Leach, this Russian agent enriched his communications by affirming that, though the English had preceded the Russians for some generations in

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not necessary to believe that there was any intention of sending the money thus proffered. The promise would answer the purpose for a while, and in the meantime there was opportunity for considering of some new device.

At Kandahar the combined intrigues of Russia and Persia succeeded in effecting the conclusion of a treaty with the Sirdars, which provided for the transfer to those rulers of the territory of Herat. It is true that it was yet unconquered, but this fact appears to have been no obstacle to the success of the negotiation. The treaty was guaranteed by Count Simonich in the following high-sounding terms: "I, who am the minister plenipotentiary of the exalted government of Russia, will be guarantee that neither on the part of his majesty the Shah of Persia, nor on the part of the powerful Sirdars, shall there occur any deviation from, or violation of, this entire treaty and these agreements."

While Russian influence was thus in the ascendant, the British mission to the Persian court was subjected to such treatment as compelled its chief, Mr. McNeill, to withdraw. At Bushire and other places, the servants of the British government were exposed to insult and violence, and the continuance of friendly relations between Great Britain and Persia becoming daily more uncertain, it was expedient

civilization, the latter had now arisen from their sleep, and were seeking for foreign possessions and alliances; and that the English were not a military nation, but merely the merchants of Europe.

to make a demonstration in the Gulph; and, accordingly, the island of Karak was occupied by a British force.

Captain Burnes continued at Kabool, but his labours did not prosper. Dost Mahomed Khan was, obviously, playing off the British and Russian missions against each other, and endeavouring to ascertain from which party he could procure the best terms. The Russians had, clearly, the advantage in one respect—its agents did not scruple to promise any thing and every thing that Dost Mahomed desired. The servants of the British government were more scrupulous; and, being able to promise nothing but that which it was intended to perform, they stood in a position very unfavourable to success as compared to that of their rivals. The recovery of Peshawur was a great object of desire to Dost Mahomed. Vickovich, the Russian agent, promised that his government should interfere, for the purpose of gratifying him. Captain Burnes could make no such promise; and Lord Auckland, in a letter to the chief of Kabool, distinctly intimated that the restoration of Peshawur was not to be expected. This seems to have given the finishing stroke to the hope of conducting the negotiation to a successful issue; it was protracted for some time longer, but it was evident that nothing was to be looked for from its continuance, and, finally, Captain Burnes left the country.

The influence of Russia had thus defeated British policy in Affganistan as well as in Persia.

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Captain Burnes had, some time before his departure, formed and expressed very decided opinions on the progress of Russian influence in Affghanistan, and the consequent danger to the British government. On one occasion he addressed to the governor-general the following remarks:—"Having thus laid before your lordship these strong demonstrations on the part of Russia to interest herself in the affairs of the country, it will not, I feel satisfied, be presumptuous to state my most deliberate conviction, that much more vigorous proceedings than the government might wish or contemplate are necessary to counteract Russian or Persian intrigue in this quarter than have been hitherto exhibited. By one class of politicians, every thing regarding the designs of Russia in this quarter has been treated with disbelief. By another, the little which has transpired has excited immediate, and, in consequence, what may be termed groundless alarm. For the last six or seven years I have had my attention directed to these countries, and I profess myself to be one of those who do believe that Russia entertains the design of extending her influence to the eastward, and between her dominions and India. With her commercial operations, she has invariably spread the report that her designs were ulterior, and the language of her agents has lately been, that, as the affairs of Turkey and Persia are adjusted, she sought an extension of her influence in Toorkistan and Kabool. Such reports would deserve little credence if unsupported by facts; but assisted by them, they

gather high importance, and exhibit views which, but for the greatest vigilance, might have eluded notice for years to come. There being, therefore, facts before us in the transactions passing at Kabool, it seems impossible, with any regard to our safety, to look on longer in silence. If Russia does not entertain inimical feelings directly to the British in India, she avows that she wishes for the good offices of the chiefs on our frontier, and promises them her own in return; so that it is useless to conceal from ourselves that evils must flow from such connections. It is, indeed, casting before us a challenge. It is a true maxim, that prevention is better than cure, and we now have both in our hands. We might certainly wish to delay a while longer before acting; but it is now in our power, by the extended and immediate exercise of our already established influence, to counteract every design injurious to us."* At a later period Captain Burnes wrote: "With reference to Russia, her proceedings are open to so much remark, after Count Nesselrode's disavowals, that I presume she must either disavow Captain Vickovich and Mr. Goutté† as her emissaries, or be made responsible for their proceedings. I have only again to repeat my most deliberate conviction, founded on much reflection, regarding the passing events in Central Asia, that consequences of the most serious nature must in the end flow from them, unless the British

* Letter to Lord Auckland, 23rd December, 1837.

† Another Russian agent, instrumental in effecting the treaty with Kandahar.

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government applies a prompt, active, and decided counteraction. I do not offer these as opinions founded on the periodical publications of all Europe (though the coincidence of sentiment in all parties does not want its weight), but as formed on the scene of their intrigues, and it is my duty, as a public servant, earnestly to state them to my superiors."*

The above remarks require little comment; but there are two or three passages upon which observation may not be thrown away. In adverting to the effect of Russian intrigue upon two different classes of politicians, Captain Burnes says that, upon one, "the little which has transpired has excited immediate, and, in consequence, what may be termed groundless alarm." The meaning of the writer appears to be, that the alarm was groundless, so far as it assumed that the apprehended danger was immediate. This is perfectly true in respect of any incipient indication of Russian policy. In the pursuit of their ambitious course, the rulers of Muscovy have committed few blunders, and rarely any resulting from imprudent haste. Reasonable vigilance would usually have been sufficient to counteract their designs, but reasonable vigilance has too often been wanting. Insatiable ambition is without doubt the leading characteristic of the Russian despotism—an intense hatred of freedom in any shape is another, scarcely inferior—a constant endeavour to win opinions and adherents, by bribes, by flattery, and every other available mode, forms a

* Letter to W. H. Macnaghten, Esq., 30th April, 1838.

third; and to these must be added a degree of wariness rarely exercised either in public or private affairs. Russia is patient, that she may be secure.

The passage next to be noticed would seem deficient in the good sense to be expected in a person intrusted with such important duties as was Captain Burnes, unless taken as purely hypothetical, not as referring to a state of things which could for a moment be deemed to have actual existence. "If," says the writer, "Russia does not entertain inimical feelings directly to the British in India, she avows that she wishes for the good offices of the chiefs on our frontier, and promises them her own in return." Now for what purpose, except for one inimical to the interests of Great Britain in India, could Russia desire the good offices of a set of barbarous chiefs ruling a barren, ill-cultivated, and uncivilized country on the British frontier, and tender her own in return? What has Russia to hope or to fear from such persons, if Britain's rich possessions in India be put out of the question? If a notorious robber be found lurking about a place where great treasure is deposited, endeavouring by all the means in his power to ingratiate himself with the people around it, and to excite their feelings against the party to whom the treasure belongs, it would evince the possession of a most unusual measure of charity to acquit him of all evil design, and to believe his protestations that he had no view to the exercise of his vocation. What business had Russia in Affghanistan?—what was the object of her emissaries there?

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These are questions which could not be satisfactorily answered, and accordingly the Russian government took another course, which will immediately be noticed. Captain Burnes observed, that Russia must either disavow her emissaries or be made responsible for their proceedings. She chose the former course—Vickovich, the agent, who was so active at Kabool, was, upon representations made from the British government, recalled. Count Simonich, who had taken the lead in directing the war against Herat, and had guaranteed the treaty for its transfer to Kandahar, was recalled—or, according to the soft rendering of the Russian government, his period of service had expired, it happening most opportunely that when the remonstrance of Great Britain was received, another officer had been previously appointed to supersede the count—and the Emperor refused to confirm the guarantee which had been given to the treaty with Kandahar. Such has ever been the conduct of Russia when not sufficiently strong to carry her purposes with a high hand; her agents are thrown over, and their master, with an affectation of libelled innocence, declares that they have acted contrary to his wishes, and pours forth much virtuous sentiment on the duties of nations towards each other, and his own exemplary respect for the rights of other powers.

The British minister in Persia, Mr. McNeill, an able and indefatigable servant of the government which he served, had constantly pointed out the injurious tendency of the course taken by Count Simonich.

What was the conduct of the Russian ministry? They denied that Count Simonich had acted as was imputed, and alleged that the British minister was misled. This allegation was refuted. Other expedients were then resorted to and persevered in as long as they were tenable; when all resources of this nature were exhausted, the ambassador was withdrawn under arrangements pretended to have been made some months before. The cool audacity which characterizes Russian diplomacy is perhaps one of the elements of its success.

Agents sometimes exceed their instructions, and Russian agents may err in this way as well as others; but in all cases where excess occurs, it is on the side which the agents believe will be agreeable to their employers. The nature of the instructions given, if not their precise extent and limitations, may always be inferred from the conduct of those who have received them. But further,—instructions, especially such as are dictated from St. Petersburgh, are often meant to convey more than meets the eye of an ordinary reader. When produced, they may appear harmless, though designed to be far otherwise, or they may be illustrated by hints and intimations which never see the light. The reputation of Russia warrants the indulgence of every surmise that falls within the range of possibility in explaining the conduct of its diplomatists—excepting, indeed, one too extravagant for belief—that of its having acted in good faith. In the proceedings of Count Simonich there is one proof that what he did

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was with the approbation of his government, which is too striking to be overlooked. He not only gave counsel to Persia, but he advanced money, and it is to be presumed that neither his personal love of Persia nor his personal hatred of England was strong enough to induce him to disburse his own funds for the purpose of assisting one and injuring the other. The money, it cannot be doubted, was that of his master the Emperor; and though, as events turned out, it was not spent judiciously, it must be believed to have been spent in accordance with the positive instructions or understood wishes of him to whom it belonged.

The Russian government, in accordance with its usual policy, was feeling its way to the frontier of British India. Its ministers knew full well that time, and much time, was necessary to enable them to pass or even to approach it; but the object was to be kept steadily in view as one of which the realization, though distant, was to be looked for with confidence. To this object all their measures with regard to the intervening countries were directed. There were not wanting those who affected to doubt of it—perhaps there were not wanting some who actually entertained the doubt, for the will, as all experience shews, has a powerful influence upon the belief. But the views of Russia were scarcely concealed, for Count Simonich talked publicly of the probable effect in India of the news of the capture of Herat, and avowed his opinion that it could not fail to cause disturbances among the Maho-

metans of that country.* Such discourses were addressed to Persian ears, and intended to produce impressions calculated to advance the interests of Russia. The reputation of good fortune is powerful everywhere, but peculiarly powerful in the East. At this time the interests of Russia appeared to be advancing and those of Great Britain to be on the decline, and though the impression that such was the fact received occasionally some slight check, the general current of events was calculated to encourage it. This was circumstantially pointed out by Mr. McNeill. Adverting to the proceedings of the Russian agent Vickovich to the eastward of Persia, he says, "The hope of receiving the submission of all Affghanistan will be a very strong inducement to the Shah to persevere in the enterprise in which he is engaged.† At the same time it may be feared that the disappointment which the Herat government must experience on learning that Kabool and Kandahar are to all appearance combined with Persia and Russia against it, and that even an unsuccessful assault has not forced the Shah to raise the siege, may depress the spirit of the gallant defenders of Herat, and lead them to submit to Persia. That submission would now certainly be followed, if it has not been preceded, by the submission of both Kabool and Kandahar. On the other hand, the arrival of even the small force which has occupied

* Letter of Mr. McNeill to Lord Palmerston, 1837. Correspondence laid before Parliament.

† The siege of Herat.

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Karrack has caused a great sensation all over Persia. The intelligence of that event must already have arrived in camp, direct from Shiraz, and the loss sustained by the Persian army in the assault, especially the loss of its most efficient and bravest officers, may, perhaps, prepare the Shah to attend to what Colonel Stoddart is instructed to state to him; but I am not sanguine in hoping for this result; the failure of the missions from the Indian government to Kabool and Kandahar, and the success of the Russian negotiations with the chiefs on our very frontier, must give the Shah a more exalted opinion than even he has hitherto entertained of the superior power of Russia as compared with that of England. He sees an unknown captain of Cossacks from the banks of the Volga or the Elba ride up to Kabool without pomp or retinue, and he sees him apparently driving out of Affghanistan the agent of the governor-general of India, and that agent Captain Burnes, who enjoys a reputation as high and as extensive as any officer who could have been employed upon that duty."* Shortly afterwards Mr. McNeill expressed himself thus:—"At this moment the united influence of Persia and Russia would appear to be established in all the Affghan dominions with the single exception of Herat; and the existence of that influence in those countries, viewed in conjunction with the course which these powers have recently been pur-

* Letter from Mr. McNeill to Lord Palmerston, 31st July, 1838.—Correspondence.

suing and the measures that have resulted from their joint diplomatic exertions, is so obviously incompatible with the tranquillity of India, and even with its security, that no measures can be more unequivocally measures of self-defence than those which the British government is called upon to adopt, for the purpose of counteracting the evils with which India is threatened. Persia has no provocation to complain of. The course pursued by the British government towards this government has been one of uniform friendship and forbearance; and it appears to me that it would be an inefficient as well as a hazardous and costly line of policy to adopt, were the British government any longer to permit Persia, under the shelter of her treaty with England, to open the way to India for another and far more formidable power."*

To check the approach of that "more formidable power," the British government sought to establish such relations with the ruling powers at Kabool and Kandahar as should be sufficient for the purpose; but the attempt failed—the "captain of Cossacks" was too strong for the English functionary with whom he was brought in opposition, and Russian influence was obviously predominant in those states as well as in Persia. The question, then, to be decided was, shall those countries be calmly given up to the enemies of England, or shall some other means of establishing British influence in them be

* Letter from Mr. McNeill to Lord Palmerston, 3rd August, 1838.—Correspondence.

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resorted to? The government of India determined on the latter course; and as the most obvious method of promoting the end in view, resolved to lend to the expelled Affghan prince, Shoojah-ool-Moolk, its aid in another attempt to regain his throne. In judging of this most important measure, as of all of similar character, two questions occur —was it just?—and if just, was it expedient?

The tenure of sovereign power in the East is for the most part so fragile and insecure, that far less attention is due to hereditary right than might properly be required in Europe. Usurpation is so common, and meets such ready acquiescence, that the possession of actual sovereignty is generally regarded as a sufficient title, if the person in possession be strong enough to maintain it by the only conclusive argument—that of the sword. The family of Futteh Khan, who had usurped the sovereignty of the greater part of Affghanistan, had no very respectable title to boast; neither could their thrones be regarded as possessing any unusual degree of stability. Yet they were treated by the British Indian government as the rulers of the country which they had appropriated; and as the English were not bound, like knights of old, to enter the lists of mortal combat in defence of all who had been deprived of their rights, they were justified in recognizing the authorities (such as they were) which were found in existence without any very nice inquiry as to their origin. They did thus recognize them, and sought to establish relations of friendship and alliance.

Their overtures being rejected, there was no obligation to continue to profess respect for a very bad title, or to abstain from aiding any one who had a better in seeking to give it effect. Shoojah-ool-Moolk had a better title, for he was a member of the family formerly ruling in Affghanistan, and recently expelled by a violent revolution. No one can say that he had not a right to enforce his claim; and if this be so, those who aided him could not be wrong unless they were involved in some special obligation, which precluded them from lawfully affording him assistance. The English were under no such obligation, for the reigning chiefs of Kabool and Kandahar, when the opportunity offered, had declined to bring them within the operation of any. It cannot be urged that the British government in India is precluded from interfering in disputes relating to the possession of sovereign authority in other countries, for it is certain that the governments of Europe do interfere on such subjects, and that in our own times many instances of such interference have occurred. Fervently is it hoped that in all cases where interference takes place those who exercise it have due regard to the question of right; but it cannot be supposed that in any case they altogether overlook their own interest in the success of the cause which they espouse; and it is not too much to believe that a regard to this is generally the chief motive for interfering. The British government thought it for their interest to interfere in the affairs of Affghanistan for the support

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of Shoojah-ool-Moolk; but it must not be disguised that his claim to the throne was not indisputable. Mahmood, who like himself had been expelled, was his elder brother; he left a son, who was reigning at Herat, and as Mahmood had been in actual possession of the throne, the title of his son Kamram was valid. As against Kamram, therefore, the title of Shoojah was not unassailable; but in states which would feel it derogatory to be compared with the wild and lawless tribes of Affghanistan, such occurrences as the preference of a younger to an elder branch of the royal house occasionally take place. In France, a prince who has been thus preferred sits calmly on the throne, and is acknowledged by every state in Europe as the lawful monarch of the country over which he bears rule. In Russia, too, which pretends to be a civilized state, the ordinary rule of succession was departed from when its last emperor Alexander perished childless. The brother next in age was summarily set aside (for every thing is summary in Russia, even the deaths of its sovereigns), and a younger brother substituted. As the title of Louis Philippe was good against all but the elder branch of his house—as the title of Nicholas was good against all but Constantine, so was that of Shoojah-ool-Moolk against every one but Kamram, and the British government were not called upon to support a prince who suffered his claim to slumber, and appeared to acquiesce in the diminution to which his dominions had been subjected. If character were admitted as an element

of choice, that of Kamram, it may be observed, was by no means calculated to attract. But whether or not the claim of Shoojah was valid against Kamram, was not the question to be settled—it was good against the adventurers who had possessed themselves of the larger part of Affghanistan, and that was enough.

There was no injustice, then, in dispossessing the usurping rulers of Affganistan in favour of a member of the House which they had supplanted. The British government was not indeed bound to dispossess them, but neither was it bound to abstain from aiding any attempt for that purpose made by a party armed with a better title; but there is yet a question whether existing relations with other countries did not restrain them. The only country with regard to which this can be pretended was Persia, and the only article in the treaty with that country on which any such pretence can be founded, is that which provided that, in case of war between the Affghans and Persians, the English government should not interfere with either party, unless its mediation to effect a peace should be solicited by both. The invasion of Affghanistan in favour of Shah Shoojah has been seriously charged as a breach of this article; but if the circumstances existing when the treaty was concluded be considered together with those which prevailed when the alleged breach of it took place, it will be seen that the charge cannot be maintained. When the article was drawn, Affghanistan was one state, under the

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government of Shoojah-ool-Moolk. It was now divided into a number of separate states, there being one government at Herat, another at Kandahar, a third at Kabool, and there had been a fourth at Peshawur. Now, how shall an article drawn with reference to the former state of Affghanistan be applied to a state so different as that subsequently prevailing? Persia was at war with Herat; but Herat was not the whole of Affghanistan. The rulers of Kabool and Kandahar were not at war with Persia, but were ready, if sufficiently bribed, to co-operate with her and Russia against Herat and the British nation. Further, the restriction from interference could not extend beyond that to which it was limited. The Persians not being at war with Kandahar or Kabool, the British government were not restrained from interfering with those states. But there was another article in the treaty which deserves to be adverted to. If the English were at war with the Affghans, the same general term being used, his Persian Majesty was bound to send an army against the latter "in such force and manner as might be concerted with the English government," by whom the army was to be paid. If the Persian monarch had been called upon to fulfil this condition by marching an army against Kandahar and Kabool, would he have complied? He might have alleged, indeed, that the state of things was altogether altered since the conclusion of the treaty, and that the article referred to was no longer applicable. This would have been true; but if true against the English, it was not less true against the Persians. There was one part of the

treaty, of the breach of which by Persia the English might justly complain: it was the following:— "Should any of the European powers wish to invade India by the road of Kharism, Tartaristan, Bokhara, Samarcand, or other routes, his Persian Majesty engages to induce the kings and governors of those countries to oppose such invasion as much as is in his power, either by the fear of his arms or by conciliatory measures." The remarkable terms employed in this article cannot escape observation. Persia was not merely to resist any actual attempt to invade India, but was to discourage to the extent of her power even the wish. The Sovereign of Persia and his ministers knew full well what was "the wish" of Russia—they knew to what object Russian counsels were directed, and whither they were tending; yet they resisted them not, but gave to them all encouragement. So hostile, indeed, had been the deportment even of Persia itself, that the British government had been compelled to employ force in defence of its interests and honour, and in protection of the officers which it employed. Persia had cast off England, an honest and friendly power, and taken refuge with the power which sought but to oppress and enslave her—to employ her as an instrument for its own purposes, and when they were answered, to draw her within the baleful girdle which encompasses the dominions of the Czar.

Persia indeed has sometimes claimed supremacy over the whole of Affghanistan, but the claim is ridiculous; and it is altogether untenable with re-

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ference to the treaty with England which recognizes the Affghans as a separate nation, with whom the Persians might be at war, not as dependents whose resistance would be rebellion.

The question of breach of treaty in its moral bearing was ably discussed by Mr. McNeill in one of his official communications to the Secretary of State for the Foreign Department. Adverting to the treaty between Persia and Kandahar, then in process of negotiation, and to the possible fall of Herat, he says, "I therefore continue to be of opinion that the fall of Herat would destroy our position in Affghanistan, and place all, or nearly all, that country under the influence or authority of Russia and Persia. I need not repeat to your lordship my opinion as to the effect which such a state of things would necessarily have on the internal tranquillity and security of British India; and I cannot conceive that any treaty can bind us to permit the prosecution of schemes which threaten the stability of the British empire in the East. The evidence of concert between Persia and Russia for purposes injurious to British interests is unequivocal, and the magnitude of the evil with which we are threatened is, in my estimation, immense, and such as no power in alliance with Great Britain can have a right to aid in producing. Our connection with Persia has for its real and avowed original object to give additional security to India, and it has been maintained for the purpose of protecting us against designs of the only power which threatened to dis-

turb us in that quarter; but if the proceedings of Persia in concert with that very power are directed to the destruction of the security and tranquillity which it was the sole object of the alliance with Persia to maintain, and if they obviously tend to promote and facilitate the designs which the alliance was intended to counteract, I confess I cannot believe that we are still bound to act up to the letter of a treaty, the spirit of which has been so flagrantly violated."*

It may be granted that the British government had a right to support the claims of Shah Shoojah to the throne of Affghanistan, but the question whether it were wise or prudent to exercise the right remains. Into this question, however, it is not proposed here to enter at length. It may be more fitly determined after pursuing the progress of events. It may be observed, however, that the general tenor of the information received by Lord Auckland led to the conclusion that the power of Dost Mahomed Khan rested on very insecure foundations; that his capital had been the seat of broils and commotions; that his brothers were prepared to combine for the overthrow of his authority, and that the reports afloat of his popularity as well as of the efficiency of his army were greatly exaggerated. In regard to the probability of Shah Shoojah's success, the governor-general was under the belief that his failure was lamented by the Aff-

* Letter from Mr. McNeill to Lord Palmerston, 11th April, 1838.—Correspondence.

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ghan people, and that a strong feeling in his favour existed among all classes. "The British government," said one of those on whose information that government acted,* "could employ interference without offending half-a-dozen individuals. Shah Shoojah under their auspices would not even encounter opposition; and the Ameer,† and his friends, if he have any, must yield to his terms or become fugitives." Another presumed recommendation of Shah Shoojah was this—pointed out by the same authority. "No slight advantage, were Shah Shoojah at the head of government here,‡ would be, that from his residence among Europeans he would view their intercourse in these countries without jealousy, which cannot be expected from the present rulers but after a long period and until better acquaintance may remove their distrust." Further, it was stated that the numbers of the Barakzees—the tribe to which the rulers of Kabool and Kandahar belonged—had been much overrated, and that the rest of the Dooranees would be indignant at seeing the power of the British government exerted to establish the supreme control of the Barakzees over the whole country: that such an act would be to injure the reputation of the British government among a people tenacious of independence,

* Mr. Masson, a British subject and a deserter from its service, who had passed much time in Affghanistan, and was believed to be well acquainted not only with the country, but with the habits and inclination of the people.

† Dost Mahomed Khan.

‡ In Affghanistan.

and yet alive to the preservation of hereditary honours and ancient institutions. Another point, suggested by a distinguished servant of the British government, Captain Wade, and which indeed was too obvious to escape notice, was a consideration of the views of an ally, Runjeet Singh; Captain Wade said, "Considering the feelings of hostility with which the Maharajah views Dost Mahomed, and that he is now scarcely restrained from prosecuting the war against the Ameer, his highness will not, in my opinion, be persuaded to abandon his hostile designs on Kabool without desiring to obtain terms of submission from its chief, to which the British government would not wish to become a party. From these and other motives, Runjeet Singh would be brought with difficulty, I think, to acknowledge the elevation of Dost Mahomed Khan to the sovereignty of the Affghans; while, should the consolidation of that people become a measure of indispensable necessity to the establishment of security on the frontier of the Indus, the elevation of Shah Shoojah would only be in fulfilment of the compact which was formerly made with him and would exact no new concessions."*

The prudential part of the question may be briefly stated as follows:—the attempt to establish friendly relations with Dost Mahomed Khan, the

* The information and reasoning which determined the course of the British government will be found in the Parliamentary Papers, No. 5. The extract of a letter from Captain Wade to the governor-general, of which part is above quoted, and another part abstracted, commences at page 19 and ends page 22.

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actual ruler of the chief state of Affghanistan, had failed. The expelled prince was ready to enter into terms of alliance with the British government, and it was said, whether accurately or not, that in addition to the sanction of a better title than his rival possessed, he had also the recommendation of a greater degree of popularity. Besides this, if Shah Shoojah were restored to the throne, the claims of Runjeet Singh to a part of Affghanistan would form no bar to accommodation. Were Dost Mahomed to be maintained by the British government, the arbitration of his differences with Runjeet Singh would be difficult,—indeed, to all appearance, impossible. On these grounds the government acted.

To facilitate the objects of the meditated expedition, a tripartite treaty was concluded, the parties thereto being the British government of India, the head of the Seik state, Runjeet Singh, and the prince, who was once more, under the auspices of the great European power of Asia, about to attempt the conquest of his lost dominions, the Shah Shoojah. This treaty was partially the same with one concluded several years before,* between Runjeet Singh and Shoojah-ool-Moolk, the execution of the provisions of which had been suspended, "for certain reasons," as was delicately, though somewhat indefinitely, intimated in the preamble of the new treaty. To notice the chief stipulations of this treaty will be sufficient. One of the most important parts of it was a disclaimer, by Shah Shoojah, on behalf of himself, his heirs, and successors, of the territories on either

* In 1834.

bank of the river Indus, then possessed by Runjeet Singh. These, including Peshawur and its dependencies, were "considered to be the property and to form the estate of the Maharajah;" the Shah solemnly declared, "that he neither had, nor would have, any concern with them;" but that they belonged "to the Maharajah and his posterity from generation to generation."

The prejudices of the Seiks were propitiated by a stipulation, to the effect that, when the armies of the two states (Affghanistan and Lahore) should be assembled at the same place, the slaughter of kine should not be permitted. The treaty contained some commercial provisions, some stipulations as to presents and points of ceremony, others relating to the assistance to be afforded by the allies to each other, to the payment of subsidies in consideration of military aid, and to the division of booty. Shah Shoojah renounced all claims, territorial and pecuniary, upon Sinde, on condition of receiving a sum to be determined under the mediation of the British government; he bound himself to abstain from molesting his nephew, the ruler of Herat, to refrain from entering into negotiations with any foreign state without the knowledge and consent of the British and Seik governments, and to oppose, by force of arms, to the utmost of his ability, any person having a desire to invade either the Seik or the British dominions. This treaty was signed at Lahore, on the 26th June, 1838. A. D. 1838.

To place one of the parties to the treaty in the

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position to which he aspired, and to which his right was recognized by the other parties, was a task yet to be performed. The military preparations consequent on the diplomatic arrangements concluded by the three powers were on a scale commensurate with the magnitude of the objects in view. Bengal and Bombay were each to furnish a portion of the British force, and the command of the whole was to be intrusted to Sir Henry Fane, commander-in-chief in India. From Bengal were provided two troops of horse and three companies of foot artillery, the whole under the command of Brigadier Graham. The Bengal cavalry brigade, under Brigadier Arnold, was formed of the 16th lancers and the 2nd and 3rd light cavalry. One division of infantry, comprehending three brigades (1st, 2nd, and 3rd), were commanded by Sir Willoughby Cotton; another, consisting of two brigades (4th and 5th), by Major-General Duncan. The first brigade was composed of her Majesty's 13th light infantry and of the 16th and 48th native infantry; it was under Brigadier Sale. The second brigade, commanded by Major-General Nott, contained the 2nd, 31st, 42nd, and 43rd regiments of native infantry. The third, under Brigadier Dennis, comprehended the Buffs and the 2nd and 27th native infantry. The fourth brigade, composed of the Bengal European regiment and the 35th and 37th native infantry, was placed under Brigadier Roberts; and the fifth, comprising the 5th, 28th, and 53rd regiments of native infantry, under Brigadier Worsley. An engineer department, under

Captain George Thomson, was provided, together with two companies of sappers and miners, native soldiers, with European non-commissioned officers. The equipment of this force was completed by a siege train of four 18-pounders, two 8-inch and two 5½-inch mortars, with two spare howitzers, one a 24, the other a 12-pounder.

The Bombay force under Sir John Keane, the commander-in-chief at that presidency, consisted of two troops of horse, and two companies of foot artillery under Brigadier Stephenson; a brigade of cavalry, composed of two squadrons of her Majesty's 4th light dragoons and 1st Bombay light cavalry, under Brigadier Scott; and a body of infantry, consisting of her Majesty's 2nd and 17th, and of the 1st, 5th, 19th, and 23rd native regiments, under the command of Major-General Willshire. The Poona auxiliary horse were to accompany this force, which also brought into the field an engineer department, a detachment of sappers and miners, and a siege train consisting of two 18-pounders and four 9-pounders.

Law has its fictions, and so has statesmanship. The force of which a detailed account has been given, though, in fact, intended for the conquest and occupation of Affghanistan, was regarded only as an auxiliary force aiding the operations of the Shah Shoojah-ool-Moolk at the head of his own troops. Under the sanction of the British government, an army had, indeed, been raised, ostensibly for the service of the Shah; and this, as a point of decorum,

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was to be regarded as the chief instrument by which he was to regain possession of his dominions. The Shah's army consisted of a troop of native horse artillery, two regiments of cavalry, and five of infantry. Major-General Simpson, of the Bengal army, was appointed to the command of this force, for which a staff and commissariat were duly organized, a military chest established, and satisfactorily provided.

The whole of the above force was to advance by Kandahar on Kabool. Another force, assembled in Peshawur, was to advance on Kabool by way of the Khyber Pass. This was called the Shazada's army, Timur, the son of Shoojah, having the nominal command. It consisted of about 4,800 men, artillery, infantry, and cavalry, obtained from various sources —British sepoys and adventurers raised for the occasion partly regular, partly irregular, and armed with almost every conceivable variety of offensive and defensive weapon—sword, shield, matchlock, musket, and rifle. With this force acted the Seik contingent of 6,000 men, under General Ventura.* The whole of this combined force was under the command of Colonel Wade. Another Seik force, under one of Runjeet's native officers, was posted on the frontier of Peshawur, as an army of observation.

The views of the British government were solemnly enunciated in a proclamation issued by the governor-general from Simla, under date of the 1st

* One of Runjeet Singh's French officers.

October. This paper commenced with a declaration that his lordship having, with the concurrence of the supreme council, directed the assemblage of a British force for service across the Indus, he deemed it proper to publish an exposition of the reasons which had led to the measure. His lordship, accordingly, proceeded to advert to various events which had produced this step;—to the treaties entered into by the British government with the Ameers of Sinde, the Nawaub of Bhawlpore and the Maharajah Runjeet Singh, with a view to opening the navigation of the Indus; to the commercial mission of Captain Burnes to Kabool; to the disputes between Dost Mahomed Khan and Runjeet Singh, and the offer of British mediation; to the attack of the Persians upon Herat, and to the intrigues to extend to the banks of the Indus, and even beyond it, the influence of Persia (for the proclamation was silent as to the arm by which Persia was propelled); to the unsuccessful termination of Captain Burnes's mission, the preference shewn by Dost Mahomed Khan to a Persian over a British alliance, and his hostile feelings towards the Anglo-Indian government; to the affront offered by the court of Persia to the British minister, and to the results which had followed; to the ill-feelings manifested by the chiefs of Kandahar towards the British government, and to the assistance which they had extended to Persia in the operations against Herat. In the crisis which had arisen, it was added, that the governor-general had felt the

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importance of taking immediate measures for arresting the rapid progress of foreign intrigue and aggression towards the territories under his administration; and this led to the introduction of the name of Shah Shoojah, as "a monarch who, when in power, had cordially acceded to the measures of united resistance to external enmity, which were at that time judged necessary by the British government; and who, on his empire being usurped by its present rulers, had found an honourable asylum in the British dominions." The disunion prevailing among the Barakzee chiefs* was noticed, as well as their alleged unpopularity and their consequent unfitness to become useful allies to the British government. Notwithstanding this, it was pointed out that so long as they refrained from proceedings injurious to its security, their authority was acknowledged and respected; but, it was observed, that a different policy was now more than justified by the conduct of those chiefs, and was indeed indispensable to the safety of the British dominions. "The welfare of our possessions in the East," continued the governor-general, "requires that we should have on our western frontier an ally who is interested in resisting aggression and establishing tranquillity, in the place of chiefs ranging themselves in subservience to a hostile power, and seeking to promote schemes of conquest and aggrandizement." From these premises it was inferred to be just, politic, and necessary, on the part of the British

* Dost Mahomed Khan and his brothers.

government, to espouse the cause of Shah Shoojah, "whose popularity," moreover, "throughout Affghanistan" was stated to have "been proved to" the governor-general "by the strong and unanimous testimony of the best authorities." The negotiation with Runjeet Singh, the conclusion of the tripartite treaty, and the effects of that treaty, were then noticed. "Various points," it was declared, "have been adjusted which had been the subjects of discussion between the British government and his highness the Maharajah (Runjeet Singh); the identity of whose interests with those of the Honourable Company has now been made apparent to all the surrounding states. A guaranteed independence will upon favourable conditions be tendered to the Ameers of Sinde, and the integrity of Herat in the possession of its present ruler will be fully respected; while by the measures completed, or in progress, it may reasonably be hoped that the general freedom and security of commerce will be promoted; that the name and just influence of the British government will gain their proper footing among the nations of central Asia; that tranquillity will be established upon the most important frontier of India, and that a lasting barrier will be raised against hostile intrigue and encroachment." The means by which these objects were to be achieved were then propounded. The relative positions ostensibly assigned to the raw levies of Shah Shoojah, and the fine army by which they were to be accompanied, have been already intimated; the passage in

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which they were determined ran thus: "His Majesty Shah Shoojah-ool-Moolk will enter Affghanistan surrounded by his own troops, and will be supported against foreign interference and factious opposition by a British army. The governor-general confidently hopes that the Shah will be speedily replaced on his throne by his own subjects and adherents; and when once he shall be secured in power, and the independence and integrity of Affghanistan established, the British army will be withdrawn." The declaration concluded with earnest professions of moderation and liberality, and of the desire of the British government to promote the welfare of Affghanistan and of its people without exception. Contemporaneously with the issue of this declaration, Mr. William Hay M'Naghten was appointed envoy and minister on the part of the government of India at the court of Shoojah-ool-Moolk; and political appointments under Mr. M'Naghten were bestowed upon Captain Burnes, Lieutenant D. E. Todd, Lieutenant E. Pottinger, Lieutenant B. Leech, and Mr. P. B. Lord, a medical officer.

The force destined to reseat Shah Shoojah on his throne—or, according to the official version of its duties, to aid the Shah's troops in effecting that object—was to be called "the army of the Indus."* By the end of November, the whole of the Bengal division was encamped in the neighbourhood of Ferozepore; and here a series of interviews took place

* This designation has not unjustly been said to be rather "à la Napoleon."

between the governor-general and the "Lion of the Punjab," Runjeet Singh.* Matters, however, of more importance than processions, exhibitions of dancing-girls, or even show-inspections of troops, occupied some portion of the time and thoughts of the governor-general and the commander-in-chief. The Persians had raised the siege of Herat, and the intelligence of this fact led to a change in the amount of preparation for invading Affghanistan from the eastward. Less strength than had been assigned for the object was now deemed sufficient, and orders were issued directing that a part only of the force assembled at Ferozepore should go forward—that part to consist of the cavalry, one troop of horse artillery, one battery of nine-pounders, and the artillery of the park; the sappers and miners, and three brigades of infantry. The remainder of the troops were to await further orders at Ferozepore. The selection of the

* These meetings were marked by a great display of magnificence on both sides. A very picturesque account of them will be found in the *Asiatic Journal* for March, 1839. Runjeet Singh seems to have indulged on these occasions to his heart's delight in potations of a fiery spirit distilled in the country; but which, although the "Lion" unceasingly imbibed copious draughts of it for forty years, is too potent for a European constitution to bear, for even a very brief period. Captain Havelock says, "the hardest drinker in the British camp could not indulge in it for six successive nights." Narrative of War in Affghanistan, vol. i. page 78. Runjeet Singh did not enjoy perfect "impunity," for, to his fondness for this stimulant he owed, perhaps, the origin, certainly the aggravation, of the paralytic affection under which he laboured.

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troops to be employed in the expedition against Affghanistan had been made by Sir Henry Fane with reference to the results of his personal inspection. Where all were thus eminently fitted for the destined service, it was difficult to determine what portion should be left behind. The solution was intrusted to chance; lots were cast, and the fortune of marching onward fell to the following portions of the army:—the first, second, and fourth brigades of infantry, the second troop, second brigade of horse artillery, the camel battery of nine-pounders. The disappointment of the remainder was soothed by the most flattering expressions of approbation from the commander-in-chief. A further change affecting this distinguished officer resulted from the receipt of the intelligence respecting Herat. The health of Sir Henry Fane was rapidly failing, the ordinary influence of an Indian climate having accelerated the effects of a long career of active military service. He was about to proceed to Europe when the expedition against Affghanistan was resolved upon; and in taking the command of it, he sacrificed to a sense of duty the gratification of a strong desire for an immediate return to his own country. The change of circumstances had rendered his retirement practicable without discredit, and he availed himself of the opportunity to seek that restoration of health which, in an Asiatic climate, he could not hope for.*

* Sir Henry Fane was induced subsequently to continue somewhat longer with the Bengal force; he did not resume the actual

It was accordingly resolved that the command of the advancing detachment should be assumed by Sir Willoughby Cotton; and that, on the junction of the Bombay division, the chief command should devolve on Sir John Keane.*

A. D. 1838. Early in December the army of Shah Shoojah moved from Ferozepore, the privilege of precedence being thus given to the force which, according to official statement, was to be the principal arm by which the conquest of Affghanistan was to be effected. The Bengal division of the British army marched a few days afterwards.

A. D. 1839. On the 16th of January the Shah's army arrived on the banks of the Indus, followed after a very short interval by the Bengal column. The march of the British force was performed with little loss except of camels; great numbers of these useful animals having been attacked by disease, attributed to change of forage combined with fatigue. The Shah's army was equally fortunate, with the exception of some desertions: a very brief experience of the habits of a soldier's life being found in many instances sufficient to satisfy the curiosity of the newly enlisted warriors of which that army was

command, but accompanied it in the capacity of commander-in-chief in India. He quitted the force on the banks of the Indus in February, 1839, and died at St. Michael's, 24th of March, 1840, on his passage home.

* The halt of a part of the Bengal force at Ferozepore led to some other changes: Brigadier Graham, who was to command the artillery, remained behind, and that part which advanced was in consequence commanded by Major Pew.

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composed. The Shah's army crossed the river in boats; and though but few craft could be obtained for the service, the passage, through the good management of the officers superintending it, was effected in less than seven days. The British force was to take possession of Bukkur under a convention concluded by Captain Burnes with the Ameer; but some delay took place, partly in consequence of the non-arrival of the ratification of the convention by the governor-general, partly from the habits of systematic evasion common to Eastern princes. The keys were at length obtained, but deceit was yet apprehended; and in the prow of one of the vessels conveying the party about to take possession was placed a quantity of powder deemed sufficient to blow in the great gate.* It was, however, not required; neither resistance nor further evasion was attempted, and the British force marched into Bukkur as calmly as they would have performed an ordinary evolution on parade.

The advance of the Bengal column towards the point where it was intended to act was here arrested by intelligence relative to the situation of the Bombay force, and the course of the negotiations in Sinde conducted by Captain Pottinger. This intelligence appeared to render it expedient that the march of the column should be turned towards

* The fortress of Bukkur is situated on an island in the Indus, between the towns of Roree on the eastern bank, and Sukkur on the western—the eastern channel, being that which separates it from Roree, and by which the British force approached, is about four hundred yards in width.

Hydrabad in Lower Sinde, and it accordingly moved in that direction; but its progress was checked by further information intimating that a change of circumstances had rendered its approach towards Hydrabad unnecessary.* The column accordingly returned to Bukkur, where preparations had been made for crossing the Indus. This was effected by a bridge of boats, over which the troops, baggage, buxies, and cattle were passed without a single accident. Previously to this event the army

* According to Captain Havelock, this latter information was extremely unwelcome. He says, "At this period the spirits of every soldier in the Bengal contingent were buoyant and high; before us lay Hydrabad—it was known to contain the accumulated wealth of the most affluent as well as powerful of the branches of the Talpore family, amounting in specie, jewels and other valuables, and ingots of gold, to eight crores of Scindian rupees well told, or not less than eight millions sterling. Such a prize is not often in a century—even in India—presented to the grasp of a British army."—Narrative, vol. i. page 151. A few pages afterwards he says, "In a moment all our visions of glory and booty were dispelled—it was announced to us that the Ameers were at length brought to a sense of their impending danger, and that, compelled to comprehend that a few days would, according to every calculation of human prudence, deprive them at once of their independence, their capital, and the accumulated treasures of years, they had accepted unreservedly all the conditions of the treaty laid before them by Colonel Pottinger."—Page 155. "Vainly repining, therefore, at the change in events which had given this small sum [ten lacs] to the state, instead of endowing the army with eight crores, its officers and men, with light purses and heavy hearts, turned their backs on Hydrabad, from which they had hoped never to recede until they had made its treasure their own, and put to a stern proof that Belooche valour which had so loudly vaunted its power to arrest their further progress; and fix on the banks of the Indus the war which they had set out resolved to carry into the centre of Affghanistan."—Page 157.

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of Shah Shoojah had advanced to Shikarpoor, whence a detachment was dispatched to take possession of Larkana, a place of some importance, being a great mart for rice, and also the depôt for the artillery of the Ameers of Sinde.

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On the 20th of February the head of the Bengal column was at Shikarpoor. Up to this time the army distinguished as that of Shah Shoojah maintained the place to which it was entitled in virtue of being considered the principal force by which the exiled King was to assert his title to reign in Affghanistan,—it had taken the lead, being followed at a convenient distance by the Bengal force, regarded as an auxiliary. Subsequently, however, the order of march was changed—the British troops led, the Shah's army followed.* On the 10th of March the head-quarters were at Dadur, a town situate near the entrance to the Bolan Pass; through this the column marched to Quetta, where it arrived on the 26th.

It will now be convenient to revert to the Bombay force, the composition of which has already been detailed.† The facilities afforded by the opportunity of water transport were resorted to, and the force

* The following is Major Hough's account of the change, and it cannot be deemed that it is quite satisfactory:—"Though his Majesty took the lead up to Shikarpoor, it was desired that the British troops should move in advance, *being better able to cope with an enemy*. Had any check been given to the contingent, raised but recently, it might have been serious; and, besides, we should have been deprived of the best of the little forage we expected, and we had more cattle to provide for."

† See page 155.

sailed from Bombay in November, 1838, and its disembarkation was effected in the vicinity of Vikkur, in the same month. The Ameers of Sinde were to have made preparations for providing camels and supplies, but they had made none. In consequence the army was detained at Vikkur until the 24th of December, when it commenced its march for Tatta, at which place Sir John Keane arrived on the 28th. Here the army was further detained for a considerable period.

Nominally in the territory of a friendly power, the British force in Sinde experienced little of active friendship. The Ameers of Sinde had always manifested great disinclination to the formation of any intimate connection with the British government; but as a more fitting opportunity will occur for inquiring into the questions at issue between the parties, attention will not in this place be distracted from the main purpose of the narrative. It will suffice to state, that differences existed, and that great difficulty was found in arranging them. The existence of these differences had occasioned the Bengal army to deviate from their direct route for the purpose of approaching Hydrabad, and the accommodation which was effected occasioned its return. The dread created by the vicinity of two British armies undoubtedly led to the pacific conclusion which terminated a series of proceedings in which the extreme verge of hostility was approached. The Bombay army advanced through Sinde; and

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on the 4th of March was officially declared to have become part of the "army of the Indus."

Previously to this, a reserve force under Brigadier Valiant had been dispatched from Bombay to Sinde; it was composed of her Majesty's 40th foot, a body of native infantry about two thousand two hundred strong, consisting of the 2nd grenadiers and the 22nd and 26th Bombay regiments, a detail of pioneers, and a detachment of artillery. At the desire of Colonel Pottinger, Sir Frederick Maitland, the naval commander-in-chief in India, proceeded to Kurrachee in her Majesty's ship *Wellesley*, having on board the 40th and the detachment of artillery. He arrived at that place on the evening of the 1st of February, and was there joined by the *Berenice* steamer and the *Euphrates*, having on board the 2nd grenadiers native infantry. The fort was summoned, and a quarter of an hour allowed to the commandant to decide his course. Upon his declining to surrender, five companies of the 40th were landed, and a position taken up by them in the rear of the fortress. The broadside of the *Wellesley* was brought to bear on the opposite face at a distance of eight or nine hundred yards, and these preparations having been made, a second summons was sent to the commandant. A second refusal followed, and the discharge of a gun from the fortress announced, apparently, the intention of those within to make a defence. The fire of the *Wellesley* was

immediately opened, and with such effect, that in less than an hour the entire face against which it was directed was a heap of ruins. The troops who had been landed then entered the breach and took possession of the fort without resistance. It turned out that the garrison consisted of only twenty men, and these had fled, seeking shelter under the cliffs on the opposite side to that at which the British party entered; they were all made prisoners. The fort being occupied, the authorities of the town were required to give up military possession of it to the British, and with this demand they thought it prudent to comply without any delay. The capture of Kurrachee took place on the 2nd of February, at which time the final course of the Ameers was altogether matter of doubt, and it had certainly some effect in aiding the negotiations in progress at Hydrabad.

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The Bombay column of the "army of the Indus" pursued its march to Dadur, and eventually took the same route to Affghanistan that had been pursued by the Bengal force. On the 16th of April, Sir John Keane, commander-in-chief, established his head-quarters at Quetta, with the advance column—that of Bengal—the Bombay column being several marches in the rear. The advance of neither column was marked by events worthy of being dwelt upon. Both portions of the army suffered great privations for want of adequate supplies; both were subjected to great inconveniences from the deficiency of beasts of burden; both were continually annoyed by rob-

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bers—a large portion of the population among which they were moving having no occupation but plunder. These persons pursued their trade up to the very verge of the encampments of the British force, and, though the punishment of death was in some cases summarily inflicted, no effect seems thereby to have been produced on the associates of those who suffered. Indeed, it was not probable that any should be produced—they would regard the loss of life as an accident common to their profession—a contingency inseparable from the exercise of it.

The dangerous and difficult Kojuk Pass was traversed in succession by the two columns, and on
A. D. 1839. the 20th of April the head-quarters were at Kandahar. The Bombay column arrived at that place on the 7th of May. The city was occupied without opposition, the Sirdars having taken alarm and fled. On the 8th Shah Shoojah was solemnly enthroned. The united British army of Bengal and Bombay was drawn up in line in front of the city, to the extent of seven thousand five hundred men. A platform was erected to answer the purpose of a musnud, to which the Shah proceeded on horseback, through a line of troops of his own contingent. On his approaching the British lines, a salute of twenty-one guns was fired, and on his passing down the line there was a general salute, accompanied by the lowering of colours in honour of his Majesty. On his ascending the throne a salvo was discharged from a hundred and one pieces of artillery. Sir

John Keane and the other principal authorities then offered nuzzurs; care being taken that the number of coins presented should in every case be an uneven one, this circumstance being an omen of good luck. Finally, the "army of the Indus" marched round in review order in front of the throne, and thus the ceremony concluded.

The march to Kandahar was a great military triumph, though no enemy, deserving the name, had been encountered, but it was attended by great suffering and great loss. "It must be confessed," says Captain Havelock, "that hitherto our task has been escorting, not campaigning, but this pacific duty has been performed under arduous circumstances; and the exposure to the vicissitudes of climate, the fatigue, and the deficiency of food and water, which tried the strength and resolution of our troops between Quetta and Kandahar, as well as the active hostility of the predatory tribes, ought never to be despised as military difficulties. How gladly would our army have exchanged them for the most determined opposition of the Affghans in the field! How often did our officers long for a battle to raise the sinking spirits of the soldier and make him feel that he was not labouring and suffering in vain."*

Some conception of the privations endured may be formed from the recital of a few facts. When the Bengal column reached Kandahar, the troops, European and native camp followers, and mustered establishments, had been for periods varying from

* Narrative, vol. i. pages 332, 333.

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twenty-eight to forty-eight days on diminished rations. Money allowances to meet the deficiency had been made to the natives, both combatant and non-combatant, but there was scarcely an opportunity of expending them, for provisions were not to be procured. The sufferings of the army for want of water were still less endurable. Referring to a part of the period during which the Bengal column were subjected to the above severe privations in regard to food, Captain Havelock says, "The plain on which our camp is now pitched is not, like the level of Siriab, watered by deep and well-supplied kahreezes,* carrying coolness and the promise of fertility down their slopes. A small cut through which we found water, flowing from a spring-head in the mountains, has alone supplied us with the useful element since first we advanced to this point. This little channel, the Kandahar sirdars have caused to be dammed up near its source in the hills, and behold two bold brigades and the levy of the Shah reduced to the greatest straits. Horses, already half-starved for want of grain and good grass, were throughout the day panting in all the agonies of thirst; and in the evening a few drops of water could not be obtained even to mix the medicines of the sick in our hospitals, or to supply them with the refreshment and comfort of a few spoonfuls of tea. All ranks have been taught to understand to-day, how little prized when plentiful, how outrageously de-

* Subterranean aqueducts.

manded when scarce, is that bounteous provision for the wants of God's creatures, water! Weary of the delays which had kept us so long at Dundi Goolaee, we moved forward on the 21st* into the plains which we had surveyed from the summit of the Kojuk Pass, recognizing all the distinctive peaks of the scattered hills which we had observed from that commanding height. We saw them now magnified as we approached them, and casting a dark shade over the plains which they overhung. Anxious looks were from time to time cast towards these green eminences, and their bases were carefully searched for any small streams which might supply the urgent wants of a thirsting force." The search, it appears, was vain, and Captain Havelock thus continues:—"It was not very pleasant to discover that this day, too, we must depend for a supply of the indispensable element on the stream of a small and imperfect kahreez. Its water was brackish, and flowed scantily and sluggishly. Thousands of brass *lotas* and leathern buckets were soon dipped into the little channel; and though proper regulations were promptly established, one-half of the force had not been watered before the scarcity commenced. Soon diluted mud alone could be obtained, and whole regiments, under a burning sun, with parched lips, sighed for night to cool them, and then for morning, that they might move on to a happier spot. The troops were buoyed up towards evening with fallacious hopes of the waters of a spring, actually

* April, 1839.

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discovered in the hills, being brought down to their relief into the plains; but up to the hour of early march no stream had begun to flow into the dry bed of a nullah,* on which many were gazing in hope. The sufferings of the soldiers, both European and native, were for some hours so great as nearly to tempt some for a moment to forget the restraints of discipline; and never do its principles achieve a greater triumph than when troops are seen obedient and respectful, and trying to be cheerful, under this form of privation. At Killa Puttoollah, officers of the highest rank were brought to acknowledge the value of this simple element. This was no time for the luxurious ablutions which, under the sun of Central Asia, preserve health and restore strength; no time to waste a single drop of the precious fluid on any bodily comfort, or for any purpose but preparing food or slaking a raging thirst; and thousands felt this day that all the gifts of that God, whose public praise and ordinances were forgotten on this Sabbath of unwilling penance, would have been worthless to man, if in his anger he had withheld the often despised blessing of water. The kindness and consideration with which some officers of no low rank shared the little portion of the much coveted fluid which they could obtain with the privates around them, was creditable to their humanity, and ought to have won the confidence and affections of those whom they commanded."† On the following day, the

* Artificial water-course.

† Narrative, vol. i. pp. 319—322.

column, after marching ten miles, was compelled to proceed further, from an apprehension of the want of water. Captain Havelock thus describes its progress:—"Forward the brigade moved, to finish a second march of ten miles, their horses dropping from drought and exhaustion as they toiled on, and leaving in the mountain passes melancholy traces of this day's sufferings and perseverance. When the cavalry had thus got over five miles, in the course of which British dragoons and native troopers were seen eagerly sharing with their chargers muddy and fœtid water drawn from puddles at the side of the road, the very sight of which would, in Hindostan, have equally sickened all to whom it was offered; they struck into a by-road on their left, and winding their way by a narrow path through an opening in the undulating eminences, found themselves towards evening on the banks of a plentiful stream. The rush of unbridled indulgence of the troops and their horses into its waters, after all the privations of the morning, may fairly be described as uncontrollable. What moderation was to be expected from man or beast breaking forth from the restraints of a two days' unwilling abstinence?"*

* Narrative, vol. i. pp. 323, 324. Referring to this occurrence, Major Hough says (note on page 92 of Narrative), "those who were present describe the scene as most appalling. The moment the horses saw the water, they made a sudden rush into the river as if mad; both men and horses drank till they nearly burst themselves. Officers declare that their tongues cleaved to the roofs of their mouths. The water was very brackish, which induced them to drink the more."

Major Hough concludes with the observation, "no officer present ever witnessed such a scene of distress."

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These sufferings were endured by men, not fresh from a state of repose or of ordinary exertion, but worn with the fatigues of a march of many hundred miles, parts of which lay through tracts of great difficulty. They had been subjected, also, to fatigues far exceeding the ordinary measure of military labour, in proof of which, the march through the Kojuk Pass may be referred to. Through a portion of this defile, the battery and field train of the army had to be dragged up and lowered down by human agency, the situation rendering impracticable the employment of beasts for the purpose. The duty was consequently performed by parties of European infantry. When to the pressure of consuming hunger, maddening thirst, and the most exhausting fatigue, is added the irritating annoyance of constant alarm and frequent attacks from hordes of cowardly robbers, it will be obvious that the march of the British force, though unmarked by any conflict deserving the name of an action, made a far severer demand upon the spirits and soldierly qualities of those by whom it was performed, than many a brilliant campaign, the events of which glow in the page of the historian, and are embalmed in traditional recollections. The task was not accomplished without great sacrifices. The loss of beasts, especially, was enormous. Useful and valuable baggage was in some cases abandoned from the deficiency of camels for its transport; those patient and enduring animals having perished in incredible numbers. The loss of horses was unusually great. The Bengal army lost not fewer than three hundred

and fifty—nearly one-seventh of the entire number employed. The Bombay column was rather more fortunate, but the loss, notwithstanding, was considerable.*

At Kandahar the army enjoyed a brief interval of comparative rest; but beyond this, little cessation of its difficulties was experienced. Provisions still continued scarce, and robberies were as frequent as before. Some reasons for doubting the alleged popularity of Shah Shoojah had by this time begun to manifest themselves. No alacrity was shewn in joining his standard, though he was now by virtue of the British arms in possession of one of the chief cities of Affghanistan, and was about to march upon the other with the best prospects of success. It was the custom of the princes of Affghanistan, when they required the services of a clan, to send a supply of money, ostensibly for "shoeing the horses" —actually to provide all necessaries; to do which, in most cases, without such aid, would have been neither within the power nor consonant to the will of the parties to whom the appeal was made. In conformity with this custom, Shah Shoojah sent ten thousand rupees to the Ghiljie chiefs,† in the hope of inducing them to join him. The aid, in accordance with established precedent, was accompanied by a copy of the Koran, on which

* Hough's Narrative, p. 102. Outram's Rough Notes, p. 89.

† The Ghiljie tribe is one of the most powerful in Affghanistan, and, after the Dooranees and the Eusufzais, probably the most numerous.

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the chiefs were expected to swear allegiance to the Shah; and this ceremony, combined with the retention by them of the book, would have been a pledge of adherence to the royal cause. This pledge, however, the Shah was not destined to receive, nor was the withholding it the only disappointment connected with the transaction; for while the chiefs returned the book, they did not feel the necessity of acting in the same manner with regard to the money. The latter they kept, though they refused the pledge which it was intended to purchase.

From Kandahar a detachment was sent to take possession of Giriskh, a fort on the Helmund, situate about seventy-five miles distant. The duty was performed without any difficulty except that opposed by the river, which at that period of the year * is deep and rapid. It was crossed by means of rafts composed of empty casks, and the fort having been evacuated by the hostile authorities, the British party had nothing to do but to place Shah Shoojah's garrison in possession. This was accomplished, and the party returned to Kandahar after a very brief absence. The British army was detained there, chiefly by the difficulty of procuring supplies, till the 27th of June: on that day an event occurred which, though not known to Shah Shoojah or his allies till some weeks afterwards, might have altogether changed the aspect of affairs in Affghanistan. This was the death of the Seik ruler, Runjeet Singh. His army was at that time employed in

* May.

Peshawur, in support of the objects of the Tripartite treaty. His death, whenever it might occur, was expected to lead to much change and great confusion; and it was to be apprehended that, happening at so critical a period, the event might have placed Shah Shoojah and his British ally in a most embarrassing position. Of the imminence of the danger they were, however, ignorant, though it was known that the "Lion of the Punjab" was seriously ill.

The march towards Kabool was commenced under circumstances not the most auspicious. A large convoy of grain furnished by the Lohani merchants* had been brought in safely, and this would

* The Lohanis are a large migratory tribe, extensively engaged in commerce, which they carry on under circumstances of romantic interest. In the winter their families and bulky property, together with their herds, which are very extensive, are left under charge of a force sufficient for their protection in the daman or border, an extensive district, stretching between the Suliman mountains and the Indus. The rest of the tribe travel to collect merchandize suited to the markets which they propose to visit, in search of which they sometimes proceed as far as Bombay and Calcutta. On the return of spring they rendezvous at Drabund, and thence advance to dispose of their goods in Central Asia and Affghanistan. The country which they have to traverse is little suited to the peaceful pursuit of commerce, being haunted by predatory tribes, through whom the Lohanis have to fight their way at the Goolairee Pass, across the Suliman mountains, which is their ordinary route. The Lohani people are at once a pastoral, a mercantile, and a warlike race; and their habits appear to be unchanged from the time of the Sultan Baber, who, in his memoirs, boasts of having plundered them.

The convoy of grain procured by these shepherd-warrior-merchants for the British force was not unvisited by difficulty and danger. The convoy encountered much resistance in the Bolan and Kojuk Passes (by which in this instance the Lohanis had

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have enabled the army to march with full rations; but the Lohanis refused to accompany the army, and no means for the conveyance of the grain could be obtained. The consequence was, that this supply

proceeded), and many persons belonging to it were wounded. The whole of the party were armed, and the leader, Surwar Khan, is represented as a most determined man. His mode of dealing seems to indicate that such was the case. His own account of it was as follows:—If he were plundered, or even if he were refused grain at any place, he took means without delay to inflict summary and signal punishment. He unloaded and piled his goods, and leaving a competent guard to protect them, advanced with the rest of his followers upon the village from which the offence had been received, which was forthwith attacked, and all its inhabitants who failed to find safety in flight being put to the sword, the wrath of the irritated Lohanis was finally appeased by the complete demolition of their place of abode. This achieved, the leader and his men reloaded their beasts and pursued their course.

The safe arrival at Kandahar of the convoy intended for the use of the British army there seems to have been endangered from causes other than the attacks of the predatory hordes by which the road was infested; and had not a party of local horse been dispatched to look out for it, there is reason to believe that its destination would have been changed. Some emissaries of Dost Mahomed Khan had secretly joined the convoy between Quetta and Kandahar, and had endeavoured to persuade the Lohani chief to carry his merchandize to Kabool for the benefit of their master. They had succeeded in corrupting many of the inferior persons employed, and would, perhaps, have carried their purpose, had they not been narrowly watched. One of these emissaries was seized and brought prisoner to the British camp. The zeal and vigilance manifested on this occasion by the ressaldar of the local horse, named Uzzeem Khan, was so striking, that he was specially sent for by the commander-in-chief, who, after in adequate terms acknowledging his services, presented him with a beautiful pair of English pistols in token of his approbation. —See Hough's Narrative, pp. 126, 127.

—for the arrival of which the troops had been for some time detained—was obliged to be left in Kandahar, and the troops and followers to march on half rations.

Little occurred worthy of notice until the arrival of the army, on the 20th July, at Nannee, situated ten miles from Ghuznee. Here preparations were made for the attack of the latter place, which proved a fortress of considerable strength, and was the residence of one of Dost Mahomed's sons, who dwelt there in the capacity of governor. The army marched from Nannee early on the morning of the 21st in three columns. On the advance arriving within a short distance of the fortress, it was perceived that preparations were made for stopping its progress. The men engaged in this work were, however, soon drawn from the open ground into the outworks, and the British horse artillery guns being brought up, a fire was commenced on the fort, with shrapnells and shot, at the distance of about seven hundred yards. This movement appears to have been introduced for no other object but to ascertain the extent and power of the enemy's fire, which was forthwith opened, and caused some casualties among the British troops before they were withdrawn from its reach.

A. D. 1839

The appearance of Ghuznee seems to have unpleasantly surprised those who were to direct the force of the British arms against it. It had been represented as very weak, and as completely com-

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manded from the adjacent hills.* Further, those who professed to have a deep knowledge of the most secret springs of action among the Affghans, reiterated the most positive assurances that neither Kabool nor Ghuznee would be defended, and these assurances seem to have received implicit belief.† In consequence, a small battering train, which had been dragged at an enormous cost several hundred miles to Kandahar, was left there, it being very desirable, on account of the scarcity of cattle, to reduce as far as practicable the demand for their labour. The impressions, however, afforded by the aspect of Ghuznee did not correspond with those derived from the reports received at Kandahar. "We were very much surprised," says the chief engineer of the army of the Indus, Captain Thomson, "to find a high rampart in good repair, built on a scarped mound about thirty-five feet high, flanked by numerous towers, and surrounded by a *fausse braye* and a wet ditch. The irregular figure of the *enceinte* gave a good flanking fire, whilst the height of the citadel covered the interior from the commanding fire of the hills to the north, rendering it nugatory. In addition to this, the towers at the angles had been enlarged; screen walls had been built before the gates; the ditch cleared out and filled with water (stated to be unfordable), and an outwork

* Memoranda of the engineers' operations before Ghuznee in July, 1839.

† Havelock's Narrative, vol. ii. p. 62.

built on the right bank of the river, so as to command the bed of it."* Such was the impression made by the first near view of the fortress of Ghuznee. "The works," Captain Thomson adds, "were evidently much stronger than we had been led to anticipate, and such as our army could not venture to attack in a regular manner with the means at our disposal. We had no battering train, and to attack Ghuznee in form a much larger train would be required than the army ever possessed. The great height of the parapet above the plain (sixty or seventy feet), with the wet ditch, were insurmountable obstacles to an attack merely by mining or escalading."†

A nephew of Dost Mahomed Khan had quitted Ghuznee, and taken refuge with the British force as it approached the place, and he afforded some information highly valuable to those who proposed to attack it. The knowledge thus acquired was improved by a careful and minute reconnoissance. The engineers, with an escort, went round the works, approaching as near as it was practicable to find cover. The garrison were aware of these proceedings, and kept up a hot fire on the officers whenever they were obliged to shew themselves. The fortifications were ascertained to be of about equal strength in every part. There were several gates, but all excepting one, called the Kabool gate, because opening on the face of the fortress in the direction of that city, had, it was reported, been closed

* Memoranda ut supra. † Ibid.

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by the erection of walls across them.* This gate was deemed by the engineer officers the only eligible point for attack; the advantages which it presented were thus stated by Captain Thomson:—"The road up to the gate was clear—the bridge over the ditch was unbroken—there were good positions for the artillery within three hundred and fifty yards of the walls on both sides of the road, and we had information that the gateway was not built up, a reinforcement from Kabool being expected." The result of the observation of the engineers, therefore, was a report to the commander-in-chief, "that if he decided on the immediate attack of Ghuznee, the only feasible mode of attack, and the only one which held out a prospect of success, was a dash at the Kabool gateway, blowing the gate open by bags of powder."†

The army, on arriving before Ghuznee, had encamped on the southern side of the fortress. The report of the engineers, and the determination of the commander-in-chief to act upon its suggestions, rendered a change of position necessary, and the force had not been encamped above three hours when it received orders again to march. It moved from the ground first taken up, in the afternoon, in two columns. The march was rendered somewhat circuitous by the necessity of keeping beyond the range of the guns of the fortress. The troops were wearied

* Major Hough seems to doubt whether any of these gates were thus closed.—See Narrative, p. 189.

† Memoranda ut supra.

by the march of the morning, and there were some difficulties to be overcome, among them the passage of the river Logur, as well as several small water-courses; a lofty range of heights, lying to the north-west of the place and opposite to the guns of the citadel, lay in the route of one column; the ascent was attended with great labour, and some peril—and this accomplished, the descent was scarcely less laborious and dangerous. When the regiments of the first division had surmounted all these difficulties, and arrived at their ground, which was not until long after nightfall, the baggage and camp followers were still far in the rear, and the troops were, consequently, obliged to pass the interval which yet remained before the light of morning could be expected, in a state of famishing and shivering destitution. They had neither tents nor rations, and were thus sentenced for some hours to hunger and a bivouac. Shots were occasionally fired from the fortress, but they produced no damage, and seemed to have no object but that of shewing to those without the fortress that those within were awake. Lights were displayed from the citadel, and these seemed to be answered by the kindling of fires in the surrounding country. Conjecture on the meaning of these signals offered food for meditation to the weary but sleepless occupants of the British lines.

The situation of the besiegers through this comfortless night is thus depicted by one of themselves:—"It was known that Mahomed Ufzul

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Khan, another son of the Ameer of Kabool, had marched down from the capital with the view of deblockading Ghuznee, and was now close to us. The forces of the Ghiljies, Abdoolruhman and Gool Moohummud, were in the field at no great distance. A party, also, of fanatics from the Sooluman Kheils, who had taken arms when a religious war had, as a last resource, been proclaimed by the tottering Barukzyes, now occupied the heights to the eastward of the valley in which the fortress stands. Reflections on these circumstances and on our want of a battering train, the glimmering of the lights on the hostile battlements and in the plains, and the chill of the night air, effectually chased away slumber until day broke on the 22nd."*

* Havelock, vol. ii. p. 65.

On such a movement as that described in the text, and of the reasons by which it might be justified, the judgment of military men must be far preferable to that of a non-professional inquirer. The following note from the work of Major Hough (p. 169) will therefore be interesting :—"Captain Outram says, it was confidently stated that Dost Mahomed Khan himself marched on the 16th (of July). The distance is eighty-eight miles (we made seven marches), and by regular marches he would have reached Ghuznee on the 22nd (next day), and as this day (21st) he would have been within one march, and would have heard the firing, he would, it was to be supposed, push on ; so that there was a great object in not delaying in changing ground. As in 1834, Dost Mahomed had moved from Kabool to defend Kandahar against the Shah, the presumptions were in favour of his march to Ghuznee. We knew from Dost Mahomed's own nephew that two of the three gates were blocked up; and it was argued by some that the sudden movement to the Kabool gate, which was said not to be built up, would put the enemy on their guard, and cause that gate also to be secured ; whereas, by a march in the morning, it

The first employment of the welcome dawn was to rescue the baggage, camp followers, and sick, from the various points to which they had been led in the bewilderment of a night march over unknown ground, and to bring them to the place selected for encampment. It was mid-day before the whole of the baggage reached the camp.* The commander-in-chief and the engineers made another reconnoissance on this day, and the result of their observations tended to confirm the resolutions previously taken. The day was enlivened by the descent from the hills of some fanatical opponents of Shah Shoojah, with the intention of attacking his camp. They were charged by the Shah's cavalry, and driven back. Captain Outram, at the head of a party of the Shah's infantry, followed them into their fastnesses, and succeeded in capturing many prisoners, and even the holy banner of green and white, under which the horde had been brought together.†

would not appear so suspicious. The movement was a delicate one, being a march in two columns by two different routes; for it involved a night march for the rear and much of the baggage, if not for the troops, as we were not to march till four in the afternoon, and the route for both columns could not be well known. The march in two columns would, it was concluded, expedite the movements; but then there were two columns of baggage to protect, and we could not protect that of the column on the right. The march of the baggage at all that night was inconvenient, and we gained no time by it."

* Havelock, vol. ii. p. 66; Hough, p. 171.

† The conclusion of this affair is painful to relate. "The Shah's troopers," says Captain Havelock, "decapitated some of the slain, and brought their heads in triumph into the camp; a

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The requisite orders for the attack on Ghuznee were circulated among the commanding officers in

barbarous practice, too nearly akin to the customs of our opponents, and unworthy of imitation by the soldiers of a King acting as the ally in the field of the British." But this instance of barbarism, which justly calls forth the indignation of Captain Havelock, was not the worst. The prisoners taken were fifty or sixty in number. The whole, or part of them, were brought into the presence of the Shah, for what purpose is not distinctly apparent. According to some accounts, the Shah reproached them in violent language; but whether this were so or not, it is admitted on all hands that the prisoners, under the influence of fanaticism, and possibly also of grosser stimulants, reviled the prince with great bitterness. One of them drew a dagger and stabbed one of Shah Shoojah's attendants in the royal presence—the whole party were thereupon put to death; but the circumstances of the catastrophe, as given in different statements, are marked by great and irreconcilable variations; all that can be done is to give the different statements as delivered by respectable authorities. Captain Havelock says—"The most audacious of them [the prisoners], after repeated warnings to desist from their traitorous invectives, were carried out and beheaded by the royal executioners."—Narrative, vol. ii. p. 69. Captain Outram dismisses the matter very briefly, as well as very vaguely. After relating that one of the prisoners stabbed a servant of the King in the open durbar, he continues—"an offence for which *the whole are said* to have atoned with their lives."—Rough Notes, p. 112. Dr. Kennedy's account is not much more positive, though far more circumstantial. The most important features of his statement are the following:—"The King, *it is said*, forthwith ordered the whole party, upwards of sixty in number, to be put to death.

* * * A British officer of the Bombay column *was said* to have accidentally witnessed the destruction of these miserable creatures, and his statement, *as it reached me*, was that they were huddled together, pinioned, some sitting, some lying on the ground, some standing, and four or five executioners armed with heavy Affghan knives—a something betwixt a sword and a dagger, the shape of a carving-knife, two feet long in the blade, broad, and heavy,—were very coolly, and in no sort of hurry, hacking and hewing at their necks, one after the other, till all were be-

the evening, and so much of them communicated to the troops as was necessary to enable them to perform

headed."—Narrative, vol. ii. pp. 39—41. Major Hough gives an account very different from those of Captain Havelock and Dr. Kennedy, though it may not be inconsistent with the very general language employed by Captain Outram. It is as follows:—"With regard to the prisoners taken on the 22nd of July, on the day of the attack on Shah Shoojah's camp, twenty-five of the followers of the father-in-law of Dost Mahomed, who was killed, were brought to the King (I believe next day), who offered to pardon them. One of them was very abusive to the King, and stabbed one of his own servants, who was standing behind him; upon which his Majesty's attendants rushed on these people, and killed them, but this was by no order from Shah Shoojah." In a note, Major Hough adds—"This was the statement given by an officer, a relation of the envoy and minister."—Narrative, p. 218. Thus stands the case:—The accounts are various and conflicting, they all rest ultimately on anonymous authority, and even the channels through which they reached the reporters are not named. All that can be depended upon is, that a number of persons were put to death; but whether these were a part only, or the whole of those taken, whether their number did not exceed twenty-five or amounted to sixty or more, whether the execution was the consequence of the deliberate orders of the Shah, or of the excited passions of his adherents, acting without authority,—all these points are left in doubt. If Shah Shoojah ordered or connived at the murder, a foul stain is thereby brought on his character. The man who had made an attempt on the life of the Shah's attendant might justly have been punished, but the slaughter in cold blood of the whole, or a part, of the other prisoners, cannot be regarded but with feelings of abhorrence. Shah Shoojah was not in a position that could justify the infliction of the extreme penalty for treason. He had re-entered the dominions in which, since his expulsion, a new generation had grown up, and he had formally assumed the sovereignty, but he had yet much to win, or rather his British ally had much to win for him. In relation to this dark transaction, there is one ground of satisfaction to an English inquirer—there is no evidence to shew that it was countenanced by any British authority.

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what was required.* The various parties of the British force destined to take part in the attack were in position before daylight. The night was stormy, and loud gusts of wind tended to deprive the besieged of the opportunity of becoming acquainted with the movements of their assailants from the noise with which they were inevitably attended. Within the fort a dead calm prevailed, not a shot was fired, and some suspicion was entertained that the place had been evacuated.

When all were in position, the attention of the enemy was partially diverted by a false attack. The British batteries opened, and were answered from the fortress. In the meantime, the explosion party were preparing themselves for the assault, which it was anticipated would put the British force in possession of the place. The party consisted of Captain Peat, of the Bombay engineers; Lieutenants Durand and M'Cleod, Bengal engineers; three serjeants, and eighteen men of the sappers. The

* The alacrity and noble spirit displayed by the troops, even under circumstances which might have excused some lack of these qualities, are vouched for by all who witnessed their conduct. Major Hough says:—"All the sick in hospital capable of doing any duty were put on the inferior camp guards: *it was found difficult to keep the men in hospital; they all desired to go.*"—Narrative, p. 176. Dr. Kennedy says:—"On visiting the hospital tents of her Majesty's 2nd and 17th regiments, I was surprised to find them cleared of sick—the gallant fellows had all but risen in mutiny on their surgeons, and insisted upon joining their comrades."—Narrative, vol. ii. p. 46.

charge ordinarily recommended to be employed for blowing open gates is sixty to one hundred and twenty pounds of powder, but as it was apprehended that the enemy might have taken alarm at the approach of the British army to that side of the place on which the Kabool gate was situated, and might thereupon have strengthened the gate,* the charge was increased to three hundred pounds. The movements of the explosion party were discerned from the ramparts, but the enemy did not penetrate their precise object. Blue lights were thrown up to afford them a better opportunity of ascertaining what was in progress, but being burned from the top of the parapet instead of being thrown into the passage below, they afforded little assistance to those who employed them. Had they been thrown over, it would, in the opinion of Captain Peat, have been impossible to place the powder. As it was, the besieged were content with firing from loop-holes upon the explosion party, and those by which they were protected, and these random operations produced little effect. The powder accordingly was placed, the hose laid, and the train fired. The gate was instantly blown away, together with a considerable part of the roof of the square building in which it was placed. Captain Peat was struck down and stunned, but recovering almost immediately, had the gratification of finding that the operation of which he had been the acting conductor had entirely

* It is said that some attempts had been made to prop up the gate with beams of timber.

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succeeded. The batteries poured their fire into the works, and the bugle sounded for the assaulting column to push on. It was commanded by Brigadier Sale, and consisted of her Majesty's 2nd, Major Carruthers; 13th, Major Fraser; 17th, Lieutenant Colonel Croker; and the Bengal European regiment, Lieutenant Colonel Orchard. The advance, under Lieutenant Colonel Dennie, entered the gateway, followed by the remainder of the column. A series of desperate struggles took place within the gateway* and town, and several

* The difficulties encountered in the gateway are thus described by Colonel Dennie himself. The passage forms part of a letter from which an extract appeared in the Asiatic Journal for October, 1842.—"The most trying and critical part of the affair was when I found myself in the dark vault of the gateway; the blue lights the enemy had thrown down became, by the time we ascended the mound or camp, extinguished, and we were involved in total darkness. As friend could not be distinguished from foe, and firing whilst mixed up with these ruffians would have been destruction to us, I forbade it with all my energies, and nothing was done but by the *feel*. The clashing of the sabre and musket, and sensible sounds of the blows and stabs—the cries and groans of those suffering and trampled upon, to one in cold blood would have been very horrid; but sense with me was occupied in trying to find the gate. Neither to the front nor to the left, nor even long to the right could I perceive one ray of light; but at last, groping and feeling the wall, I discovered to the right hand, high up, a gleam of sky or stars, and found a dense mass of Affghans still closed up the outlet, and obscured the sight so desired. Then it was I ordered a volley from the leading section, and the effect was complete; down fell the obstacles before us, and a crushing fire kept up incessantly by ordering 'loaded men to the front' as fast as the leading sections gave their volley, brought up, fired, while those in turn were covered, and reloaded. We had no time to practise street-firing; but instinct or impulse supplied the place.

officers, amongst whom was Brigadier Sale,* were wounded. As soon as the storming party had well entered the centre square, the enemy made a general rush, some for the citadel, some for the houses, from

When fairly inside I increased my front, got all into their places that were on their legs, gave the three cheers ordered (as the signal of our having won the gate), and pushed on at the charge into the body of the place, driving before us a mighty crowd, who shewed us the road by the way they took."

The entry of the main column was retarded in consequence of misinformation as to the success of the advance; but the mistake was soon rectified, and the onward march of the column resumed.

* The following account of the circumstances under which this distinguished officer received his wound is given by Captain Havelock :—" One of their number, rushing over the fallen timbers, brought down Brigadier Sale by a cut on the face with his sharp shum-sheer (Asiatic sabre). The Affghan repeated his blow as his opponent was falling, but the pummel, not the edge of his sword, this time took effect, though with stunning violence. He lost his footing, however, in the effort, and Briton and Affgan rolled together among the fractured timbers. Thus situated, the first care of the brigadier was to master the weapon of his adversary; he snatched at it, but one of his fingers met the edge of the trenchant blade. He quickly withdrew his wounded hand and adroitly replaced it on that of his adversary, so as to keep fast the hilt of his shum-sheer. But he had an active and powerful opponent, and was himself faint from loss of blood. Captain Kershaw, of the 13th, aide-de-camp to Brigadier Baumgardt, happened, in the *mêlée*, to approach the scene of conflict; the wounded leader recognized and called to him for aid: Kershaw passed his drawn sabre through the body of the Affghan; but still the desperado continued to struggle with frantic violence. At length, in the fierce grapple, the brigadier for a moment got uppermost. Still retaining the weapon of his enemy in his left hand, he dealt him, with his right, a cut from his own sabre, which cleft his skull from the crown to the eyebrows. The Mahomedan once shouted 'Ue, Ullah!' (Oh, God!) and never spoke or moved again."—Narrative, vol. ii. pp. 79, 80.

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which those who gained possession of them kept up an annoying fire on the British force below. To the attack of the citadel her Majesty's 13th and 17th regiments moved, the latter leading. This was the residence of the governor. There, the female members of the principal families had been collected, and there, too, was the magazine and granary. A strong resistance was expected, but none was offered. The 17th, on arriving at the gates, forced its way in, followed closely by the 13th; and, while those below were watching for the effects of the heavy fire which it was anticipated would be poured on the assailants, the feeling of anxiety was suddenly exchanged for that of gratified astonishment, by the display of the colours of the two regiments on the top of the upper fort. The garrison had abandoned their guns and fled in all directions, casting themselves down, in some instances, from immense heights, in the hope of effecting their escape. The firing from the houses was kept up for some time after the capture of the citadel. Some fanatical Affghans, who had succeeded in picking off men from the parties employed in clearing the streets, obstinately refused quarter, and when escape was impossible, voluntarily rushed on death, consoled by reflecting that they died fighting the battle of the faith, and with the well-aimed shots which had sent so many infidels to their eternal home yet ringing in their ears. The reserve, under Sir Willoughby Cotton, which had entered immediately after the storming party, succeeded in clearing

many of the houses which had afforded shelter to combatants of this description.

Hyder Khan, the governor, had been led by the false attack away from the point where the real danger lay. On learning that the British troops were entering from an opposite direction, he rode back, but it was only to find that all was lost. He succeeded in reaching the citadel, though not without being exposed to some peril: a bayonet passed through the waistband of his dress, and his horse rearing, he was in danger of falling, the result of which would have been instant death; but he recovered himself, and finally surrendered to two officers of the Bengal army.*

"In sieges and stormings," observed Sir John Keane, in a general order issued after the capture of Ghuznee, "it does not fall to the lot of cavalry to bear the same conspicuous part as the two other arms of the profession." On this occasion, indeed, the employment of the cavalry, in the only duty for which it was fitted, was delayed by the apprehension of an attack on the British camp, or on the rear of the storming party. It was thought that Dost Mahomed Khan might march to the relief of Ghuznee, and one of his sons, Meer Ufzul Khan, with a force of five thousand horse, was actually in the immediate neighbourhood. It appears that he heard the firing, and waited only for daylight to learn the state of affairs in Ghuznee. Daylight came, and by its aid

* Captain A. W. Taylor, of the 1st European regiment, and Captain G. A. Macgregor, of the artillery.

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the British flag was seen waving on the summit of the fortress. Meer Ufzul Khan, thereupon, made his way back to Kabool with all speed, abandoning his elephants and the whole of his baggage. The same light which warned the Affghan commander to withdraw, shewed to the British general that no reason existed for restraining his cavalry from pursuing the fugitives.

The loss of the enemy in the operations at Ghuznee does not appear susceptible of being estimated with any reasonable confidence of approaching accuracy; but it was undoubtedly great.* That of the British was comparatively small, amounting only to one hundred and ninety-one officers and men killed, wounded, and missing. In the first class, that of killed, not a single officer was included, but several were desperately wounded. Among those who suffered most were Major Warren, of the 1st Bengal European regiment, and Lieutenant Hazlewood, of the same.

A few days of repose followed the storming of Ghuznee, and during the interval, Nawaub Jubbur

* Upwards of five hundred were killed within the walls. About fifteen hundred prisoners were made, but with few exceptions they were released, it being (it is supposed) inconvenient to keep them. Some were Hindoos, found in the outworks, who declared that they had been pressed into the service. The chief gunner was a native of Hindostan. He succeeded in making his escape, but subsequently came in and gave the following *naïve* account of his feelings on the occasion:—"As soon as I heard the explosion, I knew the gates were blown open, and that you would storm the fort and take it without escalade, and I thought it time to be off."—Hough's Narrative.

Khan, brother of Dost Mahomed, arrived at the British camp with an overture for accommodation. The proposal was, that Shoojah should be acknowledged as the sovereign, but that Dost Mahomed should be his vizier. The answer on the part of the allies was, that Dost Mahomed would be provided for, but that he could not be retained in Affghanistan as vizier, nor be permitted to reside there at all, but must proceed to India. To this condition it was replied, that Dost Mahomed would not on any terms consent, and the negotiation ended.

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On the 30th of July the army began to move towards Kabool. On its approach, Dost Mahomed, like his brothers at Kandahar, fled,* and on the 7th of August, the Shah, under the protection of the British force, made his public entry into his capital. It was graced by all the marks of honour which the British authorities could offer, and was deficient in

* His flight was soon known in the British camp, and a part of Shah Shoojah's force dispatched in pursuit of him, with a small detachment from that of the British, under Captain Outram. Had this officer been enabled to give effect to his own views, the fugitive chief would speedily have been overtaken; but the Shah's officer had no desire for such a result, and contrived effectually to avert it. This person was Hadjee Khan Kakur. He had raised himself from the rank of a dealer in melons to that of a powerful chief, and was notorious for the versatility and insincerity which had marked his career. He had tendered his allegiance to Shah Shoojah, when the fortunes of that prince appeared rising, and by him he had been nominated Nusseer-ood-Dowlah, defender of the state. Miserable must be the condition of a state defended as Hadjee Khan Kakur on this occasion defended the throne of his master Shah Shoojah.

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nothing but the congratulations of the people over whom the restored King was to reign.* He however appeared to have felt himself secure, either in the affections of his subjects or the strength of his allies, and he proceeded to exercise one of the functions of royalty in European fashion, by instituting an order of knighthood, framed on the model of the British Order of the Bath. To the honour of this institution the officers of the "Army of the Indus" were to be liberally admitted, as well as a few distinguished civil functionaries, the latter being selected by Mr. Macnaghten, envoy and minister, and the former by Sir John Keane.†

* The reception of the Affghan monarch by the citizens of his capital seems to have been of a very sober character. "None cried, 'God bless him!'" All reports are to this effect. Major Hough says: "The people were very orderly; there were immense crowds; every place in the town was filled with them. As the King advanced they stood up, and when he passed on they reseated themselves. This was the only demonstration of joy exhibited on the occasion."—Narrative, p. 251. Captain Havelock's testimony is quite reconcilable with this:—"We did not hear, on this occasion, within the walls of Kabool, the noisy acclamations of a British or an Athenian mob; but the expression of countenances indicated ready acquiescence, or something more, in the new state of things."—Narrative, vol. ii. p. 118. Dr. Kennedy in the main concurs:—"If the Kandaharies cast loaves of bread and flowers before his Majesty, I can honestly say, that the Kaboolies did not fling him either a crust or a nosegay, nor shout a single welcome that reached my hearing: a sullen, surly submission to what could not be helped, and an eager determination to make the most that could be made of existing circumstances, and turn them to account, appeared to be the general feeling entertained, without much attempt at disguise, by the good citizens of Kabool."—Narrative, vol. ii. p. 83.

† The new institute of chivalry was called the Dooranee

On the 3rd of September the force under Colonel Wade* arrived at Kabool. It had moved from Peshawur in May, on Colonel Wade receiving intelligence of the march of the British army from Kandahar for Ghuznee and Kabool. It proceeded through the Khyber Pass, where the chief obstacle to its progress was the fort of Ali Musjid. Possession of this was obstinately contested for a time; but the advancing force having occupied some hills which commanded the fort, the garrison abandoned it. This acquisition was purchased at the expense of about a hundred and eighty killed and wounded. The loss of the enemy is believed to have been of less amount. "In such a warfare," says Major Hough,† "the enemy, from a perfect knowledge of

Order. It seems that there was a scarcity of stars for the investiture of the knights, and that only three could receive these badges of companionship, the remainder being obliged to be content with a few gracious words from the Shah, promising that the stars should be forwarded to them at a future time. The apportionment of glory among the military did not in all cases give satisfaction. Among the discontented was the death-defying leader of the forlorn hope at Ghuznee, concerning whom Major Hough has the following note (Narrative, p. 264): "Lieutenant-Colonel Dennie, C.B., had commanded a brigade at one period of the campaign. He entered the army on the 28th October, 1801. As major, he was wounded on the 15th December, 1824, in one of the many attacks on the stockades during the Burmese war. This officer led '*the advance*' at the storm of Ghuznee, 23rd July, 1839. He declined the third class of the order, being already a C.B. Except four, Lieutenant-Colonel Dennie had been much longer in the army than those honoured with the second class of the order."

* See page 156.

† Narrative, p. 234.

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every nook and corner, and every rock near their position, would lose less than the attacking party." The defence of Ali Musjid being provided for, Colonel Wade pursued his course to Jelalabad, of which he took possession, and then, without encountering further opposition, to Cabool.

About the time of the arrival of the Shazada's army at Kabool, those by whom the Shah had been restored to his throne were warned that though this object was achieved, they were yet practically in an enemy's country. Lieutenant-Colonel Henry, of the 37th Bengal native infantry, was marching in charge of a treasure convoy from Kandahar to Kabool; on arriving at a place called Hyder Kheil, about thirty-five miles beyond Ghuznee, he strolled up some hills in the vicinity of his encampment accompanied by two other officers, and followed at some distance by an orderly havildar and two sepoys. The officers, who, with singular imprudence, had wandered forth unarmed, were suddenly attacked by a party of a freebooting tribe called Kojuks; they retreated towards their camp, which two of them succeeded in reaching, but Colonel Henry fell mortally wounded. The havildar and sepoys were not slow in advancing to protect their commander, but the numbers opposed to them rendered their services of no avail, and the havildar was severely wounded. Some weeks afterwards the party of Kojuks were attacked by a force under Major Maclaren, the British commander at Ghuznee, at Kolalo, a village about thirty-two miles distant from that place. The freebooters were

found posted at the base of some rocky heights, up which they fled after receiving the fire of the British party. They were pursued, and though they made an obstinate defence—making the best use of the 'vantage ground, and plying their matchlocks with great assiduity and perseverance—the whole force were either killed or made prisoners. The spoil afforded ample evidence of the activity and success with which the vanquished Kojuks carried on their predatory occupation at the expense of the British army.

Notwithstanding this and many other indications of the general prevalence of hostile feelings, it was deemed safe to withdraw from Affghanistan the larger part of the force which had seated Shah Shoojah on its throne. A part of the Bengal force was to remain under the command of General Nott and Colonel Sale; the remainder, with the commander-in-chief, were to march homeward, and the whole of the Bombay column were to take the same course. The march of the latter was soon distinguished by an important achievement undertaken to avenge a series of injuries committed several months before.

During the advance of the army of the Indus, in the spring, Mehrab Khan, the ruler of Kelat, a Beloochee state, while professing friendly feelings towards the British government, had employed all the means and influence at his disposal in counteracting their views and impeding the progress of their arms. Of the acts of plunder and outrage by which the advancing army was inconvenienced,

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Mehrab Khan was a prime instigator; and his influence over the predatory tribes being great, his power of inciting to mischief made a fearful addition to the difficulties with which that army had to contend. His offences had been passed over till the establishment of Shah Shoojah in Kabool, partly, as it seems, from a hope of making him instrumental to the procurement of supplies; but his treachery remaining unabated and his hostility unsubdued, it was resolved to visit his crimes by deposal, and to elevate a relation to the throne from which he was to be removed. The task of effecting this change was assigned to Major-General Willshire, who, on arriving at Quetta, marched in the direction of Kelat with a brigade composed of two Queen's regiments and one of native infantry, two guns of the Bombay horse artillery, four of the Shah's, and a detail of engineers. On approaching Kelat the brigade was attacked by a body of horse, and skirmishing continued till the British force arrived in sight of the place. It then appeared that three heights on the N.W. face of the fort were covered with infantry, with five guns in position, protected by small parapet walls. Captain Pew, chief engineer, reported that nothing could be expected till possession of these heights had changed hands. Major Willshire immediately determined on storming them. Three columns of attack were formed, commanded respectively by Major Carruthers, of the Queen's 2nd, Lieutenant-Colonel Croker, of the Queen's 17th, and Major Wilson, of the 31st Bengal light infantry,

the whole under the command of Brigadier Baumgardt. A hill was allotted to each column, and the artillery under Brigadier Stephenson having opened fire on the enemy, the troops moved forward under its cover and commenced ascending. Before they reached the summits the enemy had yielded to the fire of the artillery and fled; having made an effort to carry off their guns, in which, however, they failed. Conceiving it possible that an entry might be gained by closely following the fugitives from the heights, General Willshire directed a rush for the purpose, but the attempt was defeated, the gate being closed before the assailants could reach it. Four companies which had been detached under Major Pennycuick, of her Majesty's 17th, to occupy some gardens in the vicinity of the place, were now brought up and dispersed wherever shelter could be found, to await the result of the operations of the artillery. These were directed towards opening a way for them. Two guns from the heights were poured against the defences above the gate, two others were turned against the gate itself; the remaining two were sent round by the road leading up to the gate, to aid in its demolition. The fire of the last two was not commenced till within two hundred yards of the object at which it was directed; and after a few rounds, one-half of the gate was knocked in. This being perceived by General Willshire, he rode forward pointing to the gate, thereby intimating that it was open—a signal no sooner perceived than obeyed by the prompt rush of the

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troops from their cover to the breach. The companies under Major Pennycuick, being the nearest to the gate, were first in; they were closely followed by the storming columns, the whole entering under a heavy fire from the works and the interior; the enemy making a most obstinate resistance and disputing every inch of ground.

A company of her Majesty's 17th regiment was now detached with a body of native infantry to secure the heights near which the southern angle of the fortress is situated, and intercept the escape of the garrison from that side. The heights were rapidly carried, and the united detachment then rushed on to the gate on that side, driving a party of the enemy before them, who succeeded in closing the gate, but had not time to secure it. It was, therefore, speedily burst open, and a second entrance thus effected. The party by whom this had been performed were here joined by two companies from the reserve of the 17th, and two of the Shah's guns which had proceeded by another route. The guns were intended to blow open the gate, but that operation being unnecessary, they were immediately placed in position to bear on the citadel, which still remained in possession of the enemy. The infantry party uniting with those who had carried the gate, the whole proceeded through the town towards the still resisting citadel. An entrance therein was at length found, but the conflict did not terminate with the capture of the gate. The enemy continued to fight with desperate valour, and resistance was pro-

tracted long after it could be available in regard to the possession of the place. Vast numbers of the enemy were destroyed; and among the slain was Mehrab Khan, whose death was far more creditable than had been his life. He fell at the head of his people, sword in hand;—he had lived a robber, but he died as a soldier; and though the issue of the combat, in which he was laid low, transferred his stronghold into the hands of strangers, it must, in justice, be admitted, that it was not ingloriously maintained. The British standard waved in triumph over the loftiest towers of Kelat, but it was not planted there without a struggle, which conferred honour on those who resisted, as well as on those who aided its elevation.

It is supposed that about four hundred of the garrison were killed. Several hundred prisoners were taken:* a few of those, deemed likely to be dangerous, if at large, being retained in confinement, and the remainder liberated. The loss on the side of the British was heavy—especially so, with reference to the fact that a considerable portion of Major Willshire's force was not engaged, and to the shortness of the contest; not quite an hour having elapsed from the formation of the columns for attack to the period when the troops were within the fort. Thirty-two officers and men were killed, and a hundred and seven wounded.

That part of the British army which was returning under Sir John Keane met with little that would

* Captain Outram says (2,000) two thousand.

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afford interest in the recital, though its difficulties from the loss of camels and similar disasters were scarcely inferior to those which attended its advance. The wild tribes, moreover, who dwell in the vicinity of the Khyber Pass, caused some annoyance. These men had long been accustomed to sell their forbearance for money. They had been subsidized both by the Dooranee princes and by Dost Mahomed Khan, and they were to have been subsidized by Shah Shoojah. Some misapprehension and delay, however, arose; and a meeting which was meditated between Colonel Wade and the Khyberee chiefs, from some cause, never took place. The tribes constantly sought to revenge themselves on the British force, and in some instances succeeded in carrying off considerable plunder. A party, returning from escorting a convoy of provisions to Ali Musjid, was attacked, several hundred camels carried off, and, with atrocious cruelty, maimed, to prevent their being made serviceable if recovered. A regiment of Seiks accompanied the British party on this occasion, but they manifested little of the lion-like character claimed by their chiefs. As soon as the attack commenced, they ran, and, says Major Hough, "never stopt till they got out of the Pass." Their flight threw the whole party into confusion. Another party, a few days afterwards, dispatched to convoy ammunition to Ali Musjid, was, in like manner, attacked on its return, but made a good defence, and drove off the enemy. Terms of agreement were subsequently settled by Lieutenant

Mackeson, but immediately afterwards broken by the Khyberees by an attack made upon a detachment marching from Jelalabad, under Lieutenant-Colonel Wheeler, of the Bengal native infantry. This attack was characterized by great treachery, as the Khyberees manifested indications of friendly feelings up to the moment of commencing it. The British troops behaved admirably, and repulsed the assailants: the manner in which the bayonet was used by some sepoys of the 37th native infantry, who had scarcely passed the period of boyhood, was spoken of in terms of admiration by their officers. Ultimately terms were made with the barbarous hordes, by the personal interference of Mr. Macnaghten.

A general order, dated the 2nd of January, 1840, announced the breaking up of the "army of the Indus;" and this will be a fitting opportunity for noticing the honours bestowed on those engaged in the expedition to Affghanistan. In addition to the thanks of parliament and of the East-India Company, the governor-general, Lord Auckland, received from the favour of the sovereign an advanced step in the peerage, being created Earl of Auckland. Sir John Keane was created a peer, and the bounty of parliament added to the grace of the Crown, by the grant of a pension of two thousand pounds a year to the general and his two next heirs male. Mr. Macnaghten and Colonel Henry Pottinger were created baronets; Colonel Wade obtained the honour of knighthood; Sir Willoughby Cotton re-

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ceived the Grand Cross of the Bath; General Willshire, Colonel Thackwell, and Colonel Sale were made knights commanders; and Colonels J. Scott, Persse, Croker, and R. Macdonald, companions of that order; while, by an extensive grant of brevet rank, the merits of several other officers were recognized.*

The constitution of the army of the Indus was formally dissolved, and the services of many of its officers who had enjoyed opportunities of distinguishing themselves had been acknowledged. Shah Shoojah had taken his seat on the throne of Affghanistan, and the functions of government, as far as they were exercised at all, were carried on in his name. But there was a vast amount of dissatisfaction prevailing in the widely extended territories which the Shah aspired to rule; and though the bayonets of his European allies had driven into exile the chiefs who previously claimed sovereignty at Kandahar and Kabool, there were spirits in every part of the country ready, at any moment that seemed to promise a chance of success, or even without this temptation, to manifest their dislike to the restored prince, and their determination not to submit to his sway. In one instance of this nature occurring early
A.D. 1840. in 1840, the British arms sustained a reverse. A refractory chief, named Syud Hoshien, had taken

* Major Hough points out, apparently with surprise, that Colonel Dennie, notwithstanding his long service (thirty-eight years), his distinguished military character, and his gallant conduct in the campaign, which led to the bestowal of these honours and rewards, was altogether passed over in the distribution of them.

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up his abode in a fort named Pishoot, situated about fifty miles from Jelalabad; to dislodge him, Lieutenant Colonel Orchard was dispatched with a force consisting of a wing of the 39th Bengal native infantry, eighty men of one of the Company's European regiments, twenty sappers, a troop of cavalry, a regiment of the Shah's infantry, and another of that prince's cavalry, with three guns. The march was performed amidst torrents of rain. On the morning of the 18th of January, the guns and troops having been brought into position at an early hour, the attack commenced. After two hours' firing, a practicable breach being made on each side of the gate, Lieutenant Pigou, with a small party of Europeans and sepoys, advanced and entered. By some mistake, the bugler with the party sounded an advance, and, in consequence, the storming column rushed on. It appeared, however, that there was an inner gate; the ardour of the stormers was thereupon checked by an unlooked-for order to stop and seek for cover. An attempt was then made to blow open the inner gate, but the powder, having become wet from the continued rain, would not explode; and, moreover, its quality is said to have been so bad, that had it been dry, there was but little chance of its being effective.*

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Another attempt to blow open the gate was made, with no better success, and the second failure

* It was of country manufacture, and is described by a correspondent of one of the Indian newspapers as little better than powdered charcoal.

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decided the question of prolonging the attack. The stock of ammunition was exhausted, and the inner gate still mocked the efforts made for its destruction. The troops had been for several hours exposed to a deluge of rain, and to a harassing fire from the fort—it was obviously useless to subject them further to these annoyances, and they were accordingly withdrawn. The attack had thus failed to drive the garrison from the fort, but it was not without effect in terrifying them, for they withdrew soon after its discontinuance, not only from Pishoot, but also from another fort in the vicinity, conveying with them, there is reason to believe, every thing of value, for nothing was found in the places evacuated but some very small stores of grain and gunpowder. The officers and men engaged in this unfortunate attack manifested the greatest zeal and gallantry under circumstances perhaps more discouraging than the ordinary accompaniments of an assault. The loss was considerable, and the ill success of the attempt shewed but too clearly that the reduction of the fort had been undertaken with insufficient means. Captain Abbott seems to have done all that was practicable with his few guns, of no great calibre, and his worthless powder; but with materials so inadequate to the work to be performed, courage, coolness, and military skill were alike unavailing.

A.D. 1840. In March it became necessary to attack a mud fort, in the vicinity of Bamian, belonging to a petty chief of the Huzareh tribe. The necessity

originated in one of those apparently unaccountable changes in the feeling of the people, or rather in their manifestation of it, of which so many instances occurred. The British commissariat had for some time been accustomed to obtain supplies from the valley in which the fort is situate, and apparently these were furnished with perfect good-will. Suddenly and unexpectedly, the conduct of the Huzarehs changed, and an application at one of their forts for a small quantity of grain was met, not only with a refusal to sell any, but with defiance, threats, and even personal outrage. Explanation was required, but not obtained, and, in consequence, a small party, under Captain Garbett, was detached to seek, by force, that redress which remonstrance had failed to procure. The fort selected for attack was situated between four and five hundred yards from the base of a table-land, the summit of which was crowned by men armed with matchlocks, who kept up a hot fire on the troops below. Unfortunately the gate of the fort was immediately opposite to this elevated land, so that the British party, in assaulting, were exposed to a fire both in front and rear; to add to their perils, a third fire was commenced from some heights on their left. They had only two guns; one of these was brought to bear on the gate, the other opened a fire of shrapnels and round shot on the table-land, which was soon cleared, while a charge of infantry and cavalry up the heights on the left produced the like effect in that quarter. In the meantime Lieutenant Mackenzie had succeeded

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in breaking down the gate. A party, headed by Lieutenant Broadfoot, entered, and the fort was soon carried. The garrison, however, retreated to the tower, whither the assailants followed them, making repeated attempts to force their way in, but without success. As a last resource, the tower was fired at the base, but this failed to drive out its inmates, and all the men were either burned or suffocated. The women and children were saved, having been removed to a spot where the fire had not penetrated when the captors entered. This affair was of small importance, but it deserves record, both as marking the spirit of the people with whom the British force had to contend, and as reflecting great credit on the small party by whom the achievement was gained.

Further illustration of the degree of repose likely to be enjoyed by Shah Shoojah and his ally was afforded by an outbreak of the Ghiljies. This event was not very remarkable: the Ghiljies had ever been a wild and lawless tribe, yielding steady obedience to no ruler or dynasty, and, consequently, no deep reverence for the restored King was to be looked for from them. It was, however, requisite to impose some check upon their lawless movements, if the authority of Shah Shoojah was to be any thing more than nominal. A party of cavalry, under Captain Taylor, of the European regiment, and Captain Walker, of the 4th horse, were dispatched for the purpose. These were subsequently joined by a detachment of infantry and cavalry, under

Captain Codrington, and, at a later period, by a regiment of the Shah's infantry and four guns of the horse artillery, under Captain W. Anderson, of the Bengal artillery. On the 16th of May, the combined force encountered and defeated a large body of the insurgents. Another expedition dispatched from Kabool, under Colonel Wallace, was equally successful. Several forts, the strongholds of the troublesome chiefs, were blown up; and if the tribe were not thus converted into good and peaceable subjects, they were, at least, awed into acquiescence, while their powers of resistance were considerably impaired.

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In another quarter the British arms met with a fearful misfortune. Lieutenant Walpole Clark, a young officer of distinguished zeal and bravery, left the fort of Kahun, which had been occupied by the English, for the purpose of procuring supplies, having with him a small party of infantry, a few horse, and about five hundred camels. While halting for rest and refreshment, he was attacked by the Beloochees in vast numbers, and his party, almost to a man, cut off. It has been said that the unhappy result was caused by the commander of the devoted party persisting in halting his men in a position of extreme danger, in opposition to better advice. How far this was the fact can never be known; but whatever might be the degree of error committed in this respect, it was not aggravated by any lack of spirit when the danger burst; for Lieutenant Clark maintained to the last the character which he had

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previously established. He shared the fate which overwhelmed those whom he led.

Another disaster shortly followed in the re-capture of the fortress of Kelat. The British government had given to this place a new chief, a descendant of an elder branch of the house of which the deceased ruler, Mehrab Khan, was a member. Either from deficiency of force, or from an undue confidence, the defence of the place had been intrusted to this chief and a garrison of the country. A British officer, Lieutenant Loveday, was, indeed, there with a few sepoys, but the number was utterly insufficient for the defence of the place; more especially as, in addition to the danger without, there was far more from treachery within. An attempt was made to carry the place by escalade, the assailants being helped up by their friends in the garrison. The opportune appearance of a small party of sepoys frustrated the success of this project. Several of the enemy were brought down, and some of those who were aiding their entrance justly shared their fate. This state of things was protracted for several days, when all hope of defending the place with such a garrison was given up, and the chief capitulated. Lieutenant Loveday was made prisoner, and subsequently murdered.

Pressing hard upon this calamity came another more heavy. The destruction of Lieutenant Clark and his party, who was proceeding to procure supplies for Kahun, had rendered it necessary that some means should be found to meet the approaching

deficiency which was to be apprehended there.* For this purpose, Major Clibborn was dispatched on the 12th of August with a convoy from Sukkur. His

* The noble spirit in which this place was defended by the commandant, Captain Brown, 50th native infantry, is illustrated by an extract from a private letter written by him, which appeared in the *Asiatic Journal*, December, 1840. "My situation," he writes, "is not an enviable one, but far from perilous; for though I have the whole of this tribe against me, and a report of another —the Kojuks—about to join them, I feel confident, with God's blessing, of being able to hold my post against them till I obtain relief. I have been strengthening myself in every possible way, with ditches, double walls, stakes, and palisades. My walls, nine hundred yards, are far too extensive for the number of men I have, so that I have strengthened a small inner fort to fall back on, in the event of being overpowered by superior numbers." In the following passage Captain Brown adds his testimony to that of many officers who had preceded him in bearing witness to the military qualities of the sepoy:—"Do not think me presumptuous, but the fact is, I have reason to think much higher of the sepoys than some writers in the papers appear to do; particularly I have every confidence in the *pluck* of the old regiment; the conduct of the men has been and continues most admirable." The severity of the duty appears from another passage in the letter:—"At night every man is on duty, and each division and man has a particular post; every follower, likewise, falls in with a thick club in his hands. The men are in excellent spirits, but we have had enough of it:—working parties all day and duty every night, and ninety-seven out of one hundred and fifty covered with ulcers." A gratifying illustration of native courage and coolness displayed in the teeth of superior numbers, of a force not to be resisted by infantry except in compact bodies, closes the extract:—"This morning I had the pleasure of promoting two sepoys on the spot for bravery. They were out with ten or twelve camel men close outside the fort, cutting forage, when fifteen horsemen rode at them. Instead of bolting they coolly pulled up, let drive right into the horsemen's faces, knocking one over; the rest made off—thereby saving the camel men, who otherwise must have been cut up."

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force consisted of about five hundred men, rank and file (including thirty-four artillerymen), three guns, two hundred irregular horse, and twenty pioneers. On the 29th they encamped at the mouth of the Nufoosk Pass, in which Lieutenant Clark and his party met destruction. In the morning they commenced the ascent, which was rendered oppressively laborious from being performed under the heat of a burning sun. A halt of a few hours then took place to rest the cattle. The men obtained little or no repose, being under arms the greater part of the night—a precaution rendered necessary by the enemy continuing to fire into the camp. On the following day the march was resumed over a road presenting, in an almost constant recurrence of ruts and ravines, a series of obstacles to the passage of the guns, which required unceasing exertion on the part of the sepoys to surmount. A march of six miles brought the force to ground convenient for encamping; but the guides reported that there was no water, and there was, apparently, no choice but to suffer both men and cattle to perish from thirst, or to carry the Pass of Nufoosk, which was environed by hordes of the enemy. The latter was resolved upon, and preparations were made for storming the Pass. The movement to attack commenced at two o'clock in the afternoon, when the flank companies of the first and second grenadiers, led by Captain Raitt, of the former regiment, moved forward to storm the height, supported by the remaining companies of the 1st regiment, and by fifty volunteers of

the Poona horse, under Lieutenant Loch. The road up the face of the mountain, at all times difficult, had been rendered still more so by the enemy. In some places it had been altogether destroyed, in others it admitted of the advance of only one man at a time, while, at other parts, breastworks had been raised across, surmounted with thorn bushes. The enemy from above kept up a heavy fire, which told fearfully; but, notwithstanding, a ridge at the head of the pass was gained. At this moment a dense mass rose on the crest of the mountain, and almost overwhelmed the stormers with discharges of musketry and showers of stones. Major Clibborn now deemed it necessary to recal the advance companies to the support of the guns and colours, when a large body of several hundred of the enemy rushed down the mountain, "yelling and howling," as they are described in a private account, like "beasts of the forest." A temporary confusion ensued in the British ranks, but it was soon overcome. The troops performed their duty with their wonted steadiness and alacrity, and the enemy were repulsed with severe slaughter. The loss on the part of the British was severe; several officers fell, and among them Captain Raitt, the leader of the storming party.

A scene followed more terrible than the conflict which preceded it. The heat was intense; the labours which the troops had undergone, sufficient to subdue the physical powers of the strongest among them. The thirst produced by the combined

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influence of heat and fatigue, in some instances increased by loss of blood, was overpowering—but no water was to be had. The cries of the wounded and the dying for relief, which water, and that alone, could afford, were aggravated into shrieks of despair and frenzy. A guide reported that water was procurable at a nullah* a short distance off, and all the animals that could be mustered for the duty were dispatched to bring a supply of the greedily-desired luxury, escorted by a party of irregular horse. But the hope, which, for a time, supported the spirits of the sufferers, proved fallacious: not only did the information of the guides prove false, but the guides themselves turned out to be treacherous. They conducted the water-party to a place where they were surrounded by the Beloochees, and killed, with the exception of a few, who cut their way through and bore to their perishing companions the fearful intelligence of the failure of their mission, and the destruction of the greater part of those who had proceeded on it. What now was to be done? The enemy had been beaten back with severe loss, but the pass was yet in their possession; and the heaps of the dead which they had left on the field scarcely affected their strength, though the repulse they had received might have damped their spirit. They yet numbered several thousands, and for a few hundred fainting men to fight their way through such a force, over ground almost impassable when without a foe, was obviously hopeless. Further,

* Artificial water-course.

could success have been hoped for, neither the stores nor the guns could have been carried forward, for the gun-horses had been sent for water and had never returned, while the camel-drivers and dooly-bearers, with an Oriental instinct of disaster, had fled, plundering the commissaries of all they could carry away. There was nothing left, therefore, but to relinquish the hope of throwing supplies into Kahun, and to fall back. Even this step, the only one practicable, involved a vast sacrifice. The safe return of the men was all that the most sanguine could hope for: guns, stores, camp equipage, all were to be abandoned, for the means of transporting them did not exist, even had no enemy been watching the movements of the devoted party. The guns were spiked, and the melancholy march in retrogression commenced. "We moved off," says Major Clibborn, "with as much quietness as the frantic state of the men would permit:"—a line pregnant with fearful meaning. At the Pass of Surtaf, the retreating force was attacked, and the small remnant of baggage which circumstances had allowed to be removed fell into the hands of the enemy, who here, also, slaughtered many of the camp followers. Pursuing their way without food to sustain their failing strength, or water to quench their burning thirst, or tents to afford shelter from the scorching sun, the force was unable to halt till it reached the town of Poolajee, whence it was not long before it departed. In the brief period that intervened, it had lost a hundred and seventy-nine

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men killed (ninety-two more being wounded), together with all its artillery, ammunition, stores, and beasts of burden. "Excepting its arms and colours," says the official account, "the detachment is completely disorganized." Victorious over those who had opposed its progress, it arrived at Poolajee with all the disastrous indications of defeat. "We beat the enemy," wrote one of the sufferers, "but heat and thirst killed us."*

* *Asiatic Journal*, December, 1840, p. 263. The writer of the letter from which the above passage is extracted renders full justice to the conduct of the leader of this unhappy expedition. He says: "Major Clibborn's conduct was capital; coolness itself." The causes of this disaster were investigated by a military commission, who reported "that the remote and original cause of the disaster rested with Lord Keane, his excellency having reduced the number of troops, and crippled the commissariat, to such a degree, that the former were not able to occupy the posts in sufficient force to protect themselves, much less to act offensively, should such a measure become necessary; and the latter, from want of means, were prohibited the possibility of furnishing the supplies absolutely requisite for their support. Owing to the above causes," continues the report of the commission, "the month of May had arrived before even the small detachment under Captain Brown was established at Kahun, although Major-General Sir Thomas Willshire had determined that a force of double the strength should be sent early in March." The report proceeds to cast blame on a great number of other officers, including Major Clibborn; but it would be impossible to discuss the multiplicity of points thereby raised, except at a length which would become tedious. With regard to Major Clibborn, however, it ought to be observed that the censure of the commission was hasty, and not warranted by a comprehensive view of all the facts of the case. This appeared from the admission made when the subject was reconsidered under the orders of the government.

The fate of the commission was singular and unfortunate.

Of the conduct of Major Clibborn, it is impossible to speak too highly. He yielded, indeed, to diffi-

The government disapproved of the revised report, and removed the president, Major-General G. R. Brooks, from the command of the field force in Upper Sinde, and the next senior member, Brigadier Valliant, from the command of his brigade. This was not a usual proceeding; as the functions of the commission were of a *quasi* judicial character, they could hardly be held accountable to any authority for their exercise of them, unless it could be proved that they had acted corruptly. A court of law, civil or military, may decide erroneously, and erroneous decisions are sometimes made. Such decisions may be set aside by superior authority, but to inflict punishment for simple error of judgment would, in ordinary cases, be considered harsh. When a commission of inquiry is assembled, it is necessarily understood that they are to deliver their opinion impartially, freely, and unreservedly. If they are not thus to act, there seems no use in calling such a body together, and their deliberations certainly ought to be carried on in freedom from the apprehension of being subjected to punishment unless they report in one particular way.

One point in the public notification of the government on the subject seems open to discussion. It is said to be obvious, "that Lord Keane, having left India in March, 1840," could "in no way be held responsible for the result of military operations undertaken five months subsequent to his departure from the country." It may, however, be argued, that if the result of those operations were at all influenced by his arrangements, or neglect of arrangements, he might justly be held responsible to the extent by which it was so affected.

Major Clibborn undoubtedly merited from government an honourable testimony to his conduct, and it was given most amply in the following terms:—"On a final review of the whole of these proceedings, the honourable the governor in council has the highest gratification in thus publicly recording his opinion that Major Clibborn, and the officers and troops under his command, have well performed their duty to government, and that they are fully entitled to his strong and unqualified acknowledgments for their conspicuous gallantry and zealous devotion to the service, under circumstances of almost unparalleled difficulty and suffering,

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culties, but they were difficulties which no degree of energy or skill could, under the circumstances in which he was placed, have surmounted.

In other quarters, the state of affairs presented but an unpromising aspect. British officers were continually engaged in suppressing outbreaks of a spirit of resistance towards the Shah, caused frequently by the demands of the prince for tribute. Their efforts were usually successful, but the necessity for them indicated but too clearly that the Shah was supported on the throne, not by his own strength, but by that of his allies. Lieutenant-Colonel Wheeler was thus engaged in Wuzerence
A. D. 1840. Valley, and late in the month of August, a small fort situated therein was very brilliantly carried by a party under his command. In Kohistan a refractory disposition was also manifested, and Sir Robert Sale was dispatched to suppress it. The point against which his force was to be directed was a fort, or rather cluster of forts, named Tootumdurra, held by a chief reluctant to acknowledge the supremacy of the Shah. On arriving in front of the place, he found the enemy posted in a very strong position. But the arrangements of Sir Robert Sale

originating in causes beyond human control. * * * * The views taken by this government of these proceedings, as now promulgated, have met the full concurrence and approbation of the right honourable the governor-general of India in council; and that high authority cordially joins with this government in the sense which it entertains, as above expressed, of the fortitude and gallantry of Major Clibborn, and of the officers and troops under his command, in the action of Nufoosk."

were so masterly, that a very short time sufficed to put the enemy to flight, and to transfer possession of the forts to the supporters of the Shah. The capture was effected almost without loss; but Captain Edward Conolly,* of the 6th light cavalry, who had joined as a volunteer, was shot through the heart in advancing on the village.

An attempt upon another stronghold, made a few days afterwards, was less successful. A breach, believed to be practicable, having been made, a storming party proceeded to ascend. They reached the crest of the breach, and for some time maintained themselves there; but the resistance was so determined, that it was found impracticable to force an entrance, and the party were necessarily withdrawn. The garrison, however, were not disposed again to measure their strength with that of their assailants; the fort was evacuated a few hours after the cessation of the attack, and the British took possession of it.

Previously to the event last noticed, Colonel Dennie had added one more to the triumphs of the British arms. Dost Mahomed Khan, after various wanderings, had succeeded in establishing an alliance with the Usbegs, under the Walli of Kooloon, by whose aid he hoped to regain the position from which he had been expelled by the British arms exerted in favour of his rival, Shah Shoojah. The army of Dost Mahomed and the Walli were advancing upon Bamian, and Colonel Dennie marched

* Brother to the unfortunate officer detained in Bokara.

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to its relief. He arrived there on the 14th of September, and before preparing to meet the enemy he had occasion to perform a disagreeable duty, by disarming an Affghan corps, whose fidelity was something more than questionable. On the 17th he received information that bodies of cavalry were entering the valley,* and on the following morning he learned that they had attacked a friendly village. He had intended to allow of their further advance before attacking them, but the circumstance last mentioned induced him to change his course, and to give them an immediate check. He had been led to believe that the number of those who had entered the valley did not exceed a few hundreds. Under this belief he had taken with him only one-third of the force at his disposal, and he was greatly surprised to find himself in front of an army estimated at six thousand strong. This was an embarrassing situation. "To have sent back for reinforcements," says Colonel Dennie in his despatch, "would have caused delay and given confidence to the enemy. It would have checked the proud feeling that animated the party with me, and gave assurance of success."† He accordingly resolved to engage with the apparently

* The Valley of Bamian lies on the route from Kabool to Toorkistan. It lies just within Affganistan, and is generally regarded as the boundary between the mountains of Hindoo Koosh on the east, and the Huzareh group on the west. It has become celebrated from the remarkable relics of antiquity which it contains.

† Colonel Dennie seems to have acted in the spirit of a distinguished naval authority, who said, 'An officer can seldom do wrong in laying his ship alongside that of the enemy."

inadequate force which had accompanied him. It consisted of something more than two hundred of the 35th native infantry, two hundred and fifty of the Shah's infantry, three hundred native cavalry, and a detail of artillery, with two field-pieces. The confidence of the commander was justified by the event. The enemy had got possession of a chain of forts reaching to the mouth of the defile by which they had entered, but they made a miserable defence. At each of the forts they exhibited a show of making a stand with their main body—their wings crowning the heights. The latter were dislodged with some loss, and finally the whole force fled in a confused mass to the gorge of the pass. Cavalry were ordered in pursuit, who followed the fugitives about four miles up the defile, cutting down many of them and scattering the rest in all directions—numbers throwing away their arms, and creeping up the hills for safety.

The result of this attempt to invade Affghanistan seems to have prepared the way for a dissolution of the alliance between Dost Mahomed and the Walli of Kooloon. A little diplomacy completed the separation, and Dost Mahomed was again thrown on his own resources. In this emergency he sought to effect a junction with his son, Mahomed Ufzul Khan, and, in prosecution of the design, moved towards the Ghorbund Pass, and took possession of some small forts. Sir Robert Sale, on becoming acquainted with this movement, broke up his camp and marched to Purwan. The forts and villages were evacuated at

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his approach, and on reaching Purwan, the British infantry ascended the hill overlooking the pass and valley, and cleared it of the enemy, who deserted one position after another, and ultimately fled in the direction of the Punchshir Valley. All circumstances went prosperously and honourably for the British arms but one. The progress of the infantry was greatly retarded by the guns, the road being very unfavourable for the passage of artillery, and it was deemed expedient to send forward the cavalry to overtake the fugitives, whose pace was far too rapid to allow any other species of force to come up with them. The 2nd Bengal cavalry had preceded the column about a mile, when a body of the enemy's horse, supposed to be led by Dost Mahomed in person, came down a hill to attack them. They were forthwith formed into line, and led on to charge by Captains Fraser and Ponsonby, who commanded the two squadrons. The officers pushed on in perfect confidence that their men would perform their duty; but they found themselves in the midst of the enemy, unsupported by their troopers. They cut their way out, being both severely wounded, and then had the mortification of seeing their men flying before the enemy. In this unhappy affair Lieutenant Crispin, adjutant of the regiment, was killed, vainly attempting to bring the men to action. Dr. Lord, distinguished as a man of science as well as a diplomatist, was also killed in this affair, as was Lieutenant Broadfoot, an engineer officer, who accompanied the advance. The officers were unusually exposed to

danger from the defection of the men, and they suffered proportionately. Various motives have been assigned for the scandalous defection of the regiment, but the probable conjecture is, that their conduct was the result of sheer cowardice *—a contagious quality, which, like its opposite, rapidly

* It has been suggested that the religious views of the troopers would lead them to dislike supporting a Christian against a Mahometan power; but this feeling, if it existed, could not be universal, for some of them were Hindoos; and it might be asked, why should this feeling have been so strong on this particular occasion, while it was inoperative on so many others? Again, it was said that the regiment was dissatisfied because one of its number had been executed by order of Lord Keane, without due inquiry. There does not appear any ground for the charge. It was brought forward in the House of Commons, and there denied by the President of the Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India (Sir John Hobhouse), whose contradiction was not met by the production of any evidence of the alleged fact. The circumstances out of which the charge arose appear to have been these:—On the advance from Ghuznee to Kabool, some marauding was committed. The inhabitants of a village, threatened with a visitation of this kind, implored the protection of the commander-in-chief, who ordered the provost-martial to place videttes round some fields of corn, which it was apprehended would be the object of attack. The orders given were to fire, in the first instance, over the heads of the persons entering the fields; but at all events to protect the crops. Some soldiers of the 2nd cavalry, who went to the place to plunder, were fired on by the guard, and one man wounded; the case took an unfavourable turn, and the wounded man died. The truth therefore appears to be, that a man in the act of robbing was shot, but without any intention of killing him, or of doing more than protecting the property attacked, and that the casualty was the result of a general order. Thus explained, it is clear that there is nothing in the transaction to reflect any discredit on Lord Keane.

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communicates itself to those around whenever it makes its appearance. The circumstances well warranted the infliction of the heaviest punishment, and the displeasure of the government which these traitors professed to serve was intimated in the most signal manner. The wretched troopers were not subjected to any corporal sufferings, but the regiment, whose name they had made a by-word of reproach, was struck out of the list of the Bengal army. The native officers and privates present on the day of disgrace were dismissed the service and rendered incapable of ever re-entering or being employed in any way under government; the remainder to be drafted into other cavalry regiments. The dismissal of the degraded officers and men was carried into effect with all the marks of ignominy usual on such occasions.

But, though marked by this scandalous instance of defection, the battle of Purwan was not only honourable to the British arms, but important in its consequences. Dost Mahomed galloped from the field of battle, and surrendered himself to the power with which he had no longer the means of contending. The circumstances of his surrender have somewhat of the character of romance. The British Envoy, Sir William Macnaghten, was returning from a ride of pleasure, when, within a few yards of his residence, a single horseman presented himself, anxiously inquiring for the representative of the British government. Having been satisfied as to the iden-

tity of the person whom he sought, he announced that Dost Mahomed Khan had arrived, and claimed the minister's protection. The chieftain himself then appeared, alighted from his horse, and presented his sword. The sword was returned, the chief invited to remount his horse, and the envoy and the dethroned prince rode on together as though on an excursion for exercise or amusement. On reaching the place where the Envoy resided, a tent was pitched for Dost Mahomed, who appeared very calmly to reconcile himself to his fate.

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The month of November, 1840, opened auspiciously for the British arms. The battle of Purwan, which led to the surrender of Dost Mahomed, was fought on the first of that month; on the third the surrender took place, and on the same day General Nott re-occupied Kelat, which had been abandoned by its garrison. On that day, also, Major Boscawen defeated the army of Nasir Khan, son of the ex-chief of Kelat, who had a few days before received an impressive lesson from Captain Watkins, in command at Dadur. On the 1st December an action of a decided character was fought. Nasir Khan, who occupied a strong position near Kotree, was attacked by a force under Lieutenant-Colonel Marshall, consisting of about nine hundred Bombay native infantry of the 2nd grenadiers, the 21st and 25th regiments, commanded respectively by Captains Boyd, Ennis, and Teasdale; sixty irregular horse, under Lieutenant Smith, and two guns, under Lieutenant Pruen. The attack took place as soon

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as daylight dawned, and the enemy were completely taken by surprise. So great, indeed, was the surprise of their chief, that he made his escape upon the first alarm, accompanied by only two followers. His chiefs shewed more spirit, and made a long and desperate defence; but the disposition of the British force was so judicious, and the spirit which pervaded it so good, that the efforts at resistance, strenuous as they were, were unavailing. Five hundred of the troops of Nasir Khan yielded up their lives in the cause of their fugitive master; and in the number of the slain were four powerful chiefs. The principal commander, named Meer Bohun, with six others, surrendered themselves prisoners, but not until those whose confidence they had sought to sustain were in irretrievable flight. The whole of the enemy's baggage and a large quantity of arms fell into the hands of the victors. The conduct of those by whom this gallant action was won was fitly characterized by their commander, whose testimony is thus given in a very soldierly field-order, issued on the day after the engagement:—"The lieutenant-colonel now concludes with saying that he never wishes to lead braver men into the field, for braver could not be found."

In narrating the gratifying events of this period, the retreat of Captain Brown, the gallant defender of Kahun, must not be passed over. It was effected by arrangements with the Beloochees, through whom he passed unmolested. It is not improbable that the loss which they suffered at Noofoosk had its

effect in giving security to this arrangement; and thus, though the expedition under Major Clibborn failed of its immediate object and was attended by circumstances of extreme disaster, it might yet, indirectly, be instrumental to the security of the garrison of Kahun. Captain Brown arrived at Poolagee on the 1st of October.*

* The overture for an arrangement, by which the British garrison of Kahun were to have safe conduct, came from the Beloochees. It was at first regarded as treacherous; but after the disaster which befel the force under Major Clibborn, there seemed little choice but to embrace it. The subsequent progress of the negotiation is thus described, on the authority of the gallant commander of the garrison:—"On the 23rd (September) a message was received from Dodah (Belochee chief), that he would agree to any terms if the fort were evacuated. Captain Brown replied as follows:—'Dodah Murree, I'll give back your fort on conditions, viz.: that you give me personal security for my safe arrival in the plains; if not, I will remain here two months longer, having provisions for that time.' The deputation returned, reporting that on receiving the communication, the whole of the chiefs had assembled together, and, after some consideration, took a solemn oath on the Koran that if Captain B. would leave the fort in three days they would protect him from all opposition down to the plains; ending by saying, that 'whatever his wishes were should be their law.' Two hours afterwards, a cossid brought a letter from Dodah himself, containing an agreement on oath to Captain B.'s proposal. He said he would send his nephew to pay his respects to him, and to see the agreement conformed to by all his people. The agreement was ratified by Captain Brown, not without suspicion of treachery. The same suspicion invaded Dodah at their interview. The negotiation was thus carried on:—'Wishing at once,' says Captain Brown, 'to see whether it was to be 'treachery or no treachery,' I, with Erskine and four native officers, met him about a mile from the fort. I never saw a man in such a fright in my life; although he had thirty horsemen armed to the teeth, and there were only six of us, he retreated twice before he would venture near us. He thought from our coming alone there must be

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The opening of the year 1841 commenced less auspiciously. The Kojuks had been accustomed to

treachery, that some men were hidden somewhere; even after we had met, he had his horse all ready close by for a start. Down we all sat in a circle—a wild scene. His followers appeared to be exceedingly well armed, and all fine, stout-built men. After compliments, &c., the nephew began to talk very reasonably. He expressed a hope 'that there would now be a lasting peace between his tribe and the British; that they had only fought at the Noofoosk Pass, to save their country and their lives; that it was the least they could do when they had the fate of Bejah Khan staring them in the face; that they had never killed any of our people after the fight, and that all the prisoners had been clothed, fed, and set free.' He concluded by saying that 'he should remain near the fort till we left, to prevent any disturbance between his people and mine, and that he would furnish me with trustworthy guides down.' There was not the slightest appearance of treachery.' Thus ended this most interesting conference. It will not, I think, be easily forgotten by either Erskine or myself; so much depended on it—the good of ourselves and the whole of the detachment. We found these Belochees the most civil and polite of men. The confidence we placed in their word, by meeting them in the way we did, seemed to please them much; and from our having been deadly enemies for five long months, we became in one hour the best of friends. No doubt their joy was just as great in getting rid of us as ours was in gaining our freedom."—*Asiatic Journal*, December, 1841.

The testimony borne by Captain Brown to the conduct of his men during their painful confinement within the walls of Kahun is most decisive. The following passage is well entitled to notice:—

"Treat sepoys kindly, and I do not think they will ever fail at the push: nearly fourteen years of uninterrupted regimental duty, I think, entitles me to give an opinion on this point, and that before formed is now fully confirmed. An old acquaintance of mine, Sheer Beo Bheg Boogtee, who had acted as guide to us through these hills last year, paid me a visit. I had had the means of shewing him some kindness. During the campaign he had been taken prisoner, and plundered of many head of cattle; and I having obtained his release, and clothed him, he has followed me like a shadow ever since."

pay tribute to the sovereigns of Affghanistan whenever those princes were enabled to enforce payment. Shah Shoojah wished to revive the custom; but the tribe, with the spirit invariably prevalent in the East, determined to withhold compliance until it should be extorted by arms. The chief place of the Kojuk country is Sebee, and against this a force under Lieutenant-Colonel Wilson, of the 3rd Bombay cavalry, was, in February, 1841, dispatched A. D. 184 to give effect to the Shah's demands. The force consisted of Colonel Wilson's regiment of cavalry, some local horse, a wing of the 20th Bombay native infantry, two hundred of the 2nd grenadiers, and a troop of horse artillery. The place to be attacked was strong, and the *matériel* for a siege found by Colonel Wilson inefficient. The attack was, however, made and supported with much gallantry, but it altogether failed, and the loss in British officers was serious with reference to the object to be gained. Colonel Wilson was mortally wounded, Lieutenant Falconer of the 2nd grenadiers, and Lieutenant Creed, of the artillery, killed. The latter officer was shot through the heart while, with a small party of steady followers, vainly attempting to turn the fortune of the day. The Kojuks pursued on this occasion the course—not unusual—of defending a fortified place with desperation, and then seeking safety in flight. In the morning Sebee was found abandoned.

In the north, affairs were somewhat more prosperous, though there the intervention of military force to uphold the house of Shah Shoojah was

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also required. It was deemed necessary to coerce a tribe inhabiting the Nazeem Valley, and thither a considerable force was dispatched under Brigadier Shelton. It was composed of her Majesty's 44th regiment, the 27th Bengal native infantry, a troop of horse artillery, a detachment of sappers and miners, and a considerable body of the Shah's force of various descriptions. The valley, which was the object of attack, was thickly studded with small forts; these were attacked in succession and carried; but success was dimmed by the loss of two valuable officers, Captain Douglas, assistant adjutant general, a volunteer, and Lieutenant Pigou, a highly meritorious engineer officer, who was blown away by the premature explosion of a bag of powder applied to the gate of one of the forts.

Further illustration of the difficulty of establishing Shah Shoojah on his throne, and maintaining him there, was afforded by the continued disturbances created by the Ghiljie tribe, and the constant necessity of armed interference on the part of the
A. D. 1841. British forces to suppress them. Early in May a fort near Khelat-i-Ghiljie became an object of contention. It was taken by the English after some resistance, the gate being blown open with bags of powder, an operation which, after the success which attended it at Ghuznee, seems to have been a favourite one. On the 29th of the same month, a detachment under Captain Wymer, marching from Kandahar to Khelat-i-Ghilzie, in charge of a convoy, was attacked at Eelme by a body of Ghiljies,

amounting, at the commencement of the engagement, to two thousand five hundred, but swelled, by reinforcements, to upwards of five thousand before its termination. On intelligence of the meditated attack reaching the commanding officer, he placed his small force in the position which he deemed most favourable for receiving the enemy; it being, as he observes, impracticable, "from the paucity of troops and the magnitude of the convoy, for him to act otherwise than on the defensive."* The British force consisted only of four companies of the 38th regiment of Bengal native infantry, a wing of the Shah's cavalry, a small party of sappers and miners, and two guns of the horse artillery. On the first appearance of the enemy, which was in one dense mass, the two guns were opened on them with great precision and effect, whereupon the Ghiljies formed into three distinct columns in order to make a simultaneous attack on the right, left, and centre of the British. The attack was met with admirable coolness and gallantry; the enemy was permitted to approach within a short distance, when the fire of the infantry line was poured upon them with such effect as to indicate the necessity for a change of operations. The enemy's force was again consolidated, his right and centre columns uniting, with the left resting upon and lining the banks of the Turnak river, near which the engagement took place. This change rendered necessary a corre-

* Despatch from Lieutenant-Colonel Wymer to Captain Grant, officiating assistant adjutant-general. 31st May, 1841.

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sponding one in the position of the British detachment, which was made with great steadiness, though under an annoying fire, and an interruption occasioned, it is believed by an impression entertained on the part of the enemy that their antagonists were about to retreat. Under this impression, a large body of infantry, armed with swords, rushed upon the 38th, uttering a loud shout, and anticipating the speedy discomfiture of those whom they assailed; but they had the mortification to find that they were mistaken, and the reception which they met with soon convinced them that the field was not yet in their possession. From this time the combined efforts of the enemy were devoted in succession to all points, but without their gaining a single advantage; and after continuing the fight between four and five hours, they withdrew from a contest in which they had been worsted in every attempt which they had made to shake the security of the British position. By daybreak they had moved beyond the range of any intelligence which Colonel Wymer could procure. The conduct of the 38th native infantry, on this occasion, was most exemplary, and in some instances under circumstances where the habitual obedience of the soldier is severely tested. At one time, when they were exposed to a heavy fire from the enemy, it became necessary that they should refrain from returning it, and an order to that effect was obeyed with the most rigid exactness; not a shot was discharged till the men were commanded again to commence firing.

Obedience like this is among the best fruits of military discipline. The loss of the British was small; that of the enemy considerable, but its amount could not be estimated with any degree of precision, as many of the killed and wounded, lying at a distance from the British position, were carried off under cover of the night.

A large body of Ghiljies and others, amounting, it is said, to six thousand, was defeated on the 2nd of July by Captain Woodburn, commanding a field detachment on the Helmund. The value of the services of Captain Woodburn, and of the British officers and men, on this occasion, is greatly enhanced by a consideration of the very indifferent instruments with which they had to work. The whole force was furnished from the levies of the Shah, and a portion at least of it could not be trusted. With an effective force the enemy might have been pursued and dispersed, but prudence forbade any attempt of the kind under the circumstances which existed. Captain Woodburn, in his report of the affair, says: "In both a military and political point of view, it would be of the greatest importance to follow up and disperse the rebels, but with reference to their numbers, and the notoriously disaffected state of the country, I do not consider that I should be justified in moving after them, with a weak regiment of infantry, two guns, and with cavalry in which every confidence cannot be placed."*

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* Letter from Captain Woodburn to Captain Polwhele, major of brigade, 5th July, 1841.

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Success followed the British arms in various engagements of smaller or greater importance with the same enemy. In the beginning of August, a body of Ghiljies were routed by some regular and irregular cavalry, commanded respectively by Lieut. Bazett and Captain Walker, and forming part of a detachment encamped in the Karrootoo Valley, under Lieut.-Colonel R. E. Chambers. Later in the same month, Captain John Griffin, commanding a field detachment in Zemindawur, attacked and dispersed a body of about five thousand, near Khishwura. They were headed by two chiefs, named Akram Khan and Akhtar Khan, the latter having commanded the Ghiljies when they were defeated, in July, by Captain Woodburn. On this occasion the enemy, in an attempt to form into columns, were broken and thrown into utter confusion by a charge made by Captain Hart, with a regiment of the Shah's cavalry, who do not appear previously to have enjoyed a very good reputation. A similar regiment had been placed on rear-guard duty, under Lieutenant Golding, but the success of their companions inspired them with a desire to take part in the engagement. They were indulged by being permitted to join in the pursuit, and behaved well. The force of the British, though not small, was not exclusively of the best description as to men, and it was inferior in numbers to that of the enemy. The 2nd regiment of Bengal native infantry were engaged; the remainder of the force employed belonged to the army of the Shah Shoojah. It numbered thirteen

hundred and fifty bayonets, eight hundred sabres, and four six-pounders.

The month of September passed in a manner generally tranquil. Little of an opposite character occurred, excepting in the Zoormut Valley, whither a small force had proceeded to enforce payment of the Shah's tribute. Another object proposed in the employment of this force was the seizure of some persons hostile to the government, who it was stated had taken refuge in a fort in that country. The fort was represented as being very weak, and further it was believed that no defence would be attempted. On both points expectation was disappointed. The fort was defended, and it was so strong that the means possessed by the British officer in command, Captain Hay, were altogether insufficient for its reduction. Instead of being permitted to occupy it without resistance, as had been anticipated, the Shah's troops were fired upon: a few shots were fired in return, but without making any impression on the walls within which the enemy were sheltered from attack. A force better provided with materials for destruction was subsequently dispatched, and the fort, with others in the vicinity, rased.

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At the close of September, the country generally exhibited greater appearance of tranquillity than it had manifested at any former time since the entry of Shah Shoojah under the auspices of his British ally. It was now in a perfect state of peace. Such a state had never been known in Affghanistan, and the surface was so smooth, that the belief that Shah

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Shoojah was firmly seated on the throne seems to have been entertained; not indeed so firmly as to forbid all exhibition of occasional outbreaks of opposition, but to such an extent as to lead to a persuasion that he might be left in a great degree to himself—that the British troops might at an early period be altogether withdrawn, and that the European adviser, by whose counsels the Shah had been guided from the outset of the expedition, might without any further delay be relieved from his onerous duties. Sir James Carnac had resigned the government of Bombay: Sir William Macnaghten had been appointed to the
A. D. 1841. office, and proposed, on the 28th of October, to surrender his charge in Affghanistan to Captain Sir Alexander Burnes, and depart to take possession of his new office. Before the arrival of that day, a great change had taken place in the aspect of affairs.

Revolt and intestine war were certainly not to be regarded as events of improbable occurrence in the newly established kingdom of Affghanistan; with or without reasonable cause, they were to be looked for, at least, for a considerable time. The beginning of the month of October was marked by the departure from the court of Shah Shoojah of some chiefs of considerable power and influence. Their first act was the plunder of a caravan—an exploit perfectly in accordance with the prevailing code of morals in Affghanistan. Humzee Khan, a man of high rank, was dispatched after the fugitives, to induce them to return by the promise of redress of any real grievances; but his mission was attended with ex-

actly the degree of success that might have been looked for, from a fact which does not appear at the time to have been known to the British Envoy, but which he soon afterwards learned. Humzee Khan was himself the chief instigator of the hostile movement which he was dispatched to check.

The ostensible reasons for the defection of the Ghiljie chiefs were two—the first being the reduction of certain allowances which they had received for services rendered in keeping in some degree of order the predatory tribes frequenting the passes. The reduction was defended upon the two grounds of necessity and justice. The government of Calcutta had made many and heavy complaints of the expense of the proceedings in Affghanistan, and had urged the necessity of Shah Shoojah ceasing to rely on his ally for pecuniary support; the difficulties of collecting tribute were great; to borrow, the ordinary resource of Eastern princes, was, in the circumstances of Affghanistan, not easily practicable; and there seemed no course open but to diminish in some way the charges of the government. The particular head of charge selected for reduction was that which was made up of the allowances above noticed. The point was delicate, and the prospects of success not very promising—for those who unwillingly paid a reduced amount of tribute were not likely to give a very cheerful assent to the payment of an enhanced amount. Financial pressure was, undoubtedly, the chief motive which led the British authorities to acquiesce in the reduction. With regard to Shah

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Shoojah and his native advisers, it is not necessary to resort to the existence of such pressure for a motive. The Eastern principle of wringing from a dependent as much as possible, and of never observing an engagement if it be practicable to break it with advantage, are quite sufficient to account for their approval of the plan. It has, however, been intimated that the plea of necessity was supported on another, grounded on a sense of justice. It was said that, in consequence of a reduction in the price of grain, the reduced allowances were substantially greater than the chiefs received from Dost Mahomed for services similar to those for which they were now to be paid by Shah Shoojah, but this was not an argument likely to satisfy those who claimed the allowances; nor, in truth, could the inferior advantages derived by these chiefs under an agreement made with one man be very reasonably alleged as a ground for setting aside a different agreement made with another. Shah Shoojah would have been justified in refusing at first to give more than his predecessor; but if he did agree to give more, he was bound to fulfil his engagement.

The second ground of discontent put forth by the dissatisfied chiefs was, that they were required to be responsible for robberies by the eastern Ghiljies, wherever such robberies might be committed. This might be oppressive; but here the remark suggested by the conduct of the Shah seems applicable to his insurgent chiefs. If the responsibility of which they complained formed part of the contract into

which they entered, their reflections on its inconveniences came too late.

Other causes have been assigned, and they, without doubt, aided in precipitating insurrection at this particular time. The great chiefs saw that their independence would be affected and their power shaken by the new order of things. They had never known any but a state of anarchy, and they dreaded any other. Personally, Shah Shoojah seems to have been unpopular, but any one who required obedience from the wild and reckless chiefs of Affghanistan would have been unpopular also. But further, the Affghan chiefs and people were Mahometans, inflamed with all the burning bigotry which scorches the bosoms of the sincere and zealous followers of the pseudo Prophet, abhorring Christians more than the most dangerous beasts that prowl for midnight prey, or the most noxious reptiles that find shelter in the jungle, and extending their hatred to a prince whom they saw enthroned amid the bayonets of a people professing the religion which they so much detested. All these feelings were, undoubtedly, at work, to counteract British authority and influence in Affghanistan. How much of each entered into any one outburst cannot be determined. Private interest, personal vanity, fanatical excitement, were alike enlisted against the British and the Shah. In a long course of years, if a strong government could have been maintained, their influence might have been crushed, but time and a vigorous arm were both requisite for the task.

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The mission of the perfidious minister, Humzee Khan, having failed, more efficient means of dealing with the insurgent chiefs were resorted to in the employment of a military force commanded by Sir Robert Sale, which was marching to Jelalabad, preparatory to its return to India. The first task to be performed was the forcing the pass of Khoord Kabool, which the disaffected chiefs had occupied. They here held a strong position, their main body being posted behind a breastwork near the middle of the pass, while parties occupied the surrounding heights. While the attention of the enemy was partially diverted by an assault upon another point, the troops destined for the chief attack, which was to be directed against the enemy's front, entered the gorge of the valley. The advanced guard consisted of two companies of her Majesty's 13th light infantry, the flank companies of the 35th Bengal native infantry, a detachment of pioneers and two guns. The remainder of the two regiments of infantry formed the main body. As the British force approached, it was discovered that the enemy were withdrawing from their position in the valley, and occupying the rocky ridges of the mountains on both sides. They opened a well-directed fire, and in an early stage of the action Sir Robert Sale was wounded, and compelled to leave the field. He had previously directed two companies of the 13th, and one of the 35th, to ascend the precipitous heights for the purpose of clearing them. Colonel Dennie, who assumed the command on Sir Robert Sale being disabled, brought up the main column

and guns to the enemy's breastwork in the valley, and, finding it evacuated, pushed them forward to the extremity of the pass opposite to that by which they had entered, where he took up an excellent position under cover of the walls of a fort which, though deserted, was of some strength. In the meantime, the skirmishers on the heights had ably performed their work of clearing them of the enemy. The native infantry remained at the fort, which had been taken up; the European force returned to their encampment at Boothauk. As they marched back, some parties of the enemy occasionally shewed themselves, and some loss was sustained in repelling their attacks. While the force under Sir Robert Sale was thus divided, they were exposed to several night attacks, in one of which the 38th suffered severely, many men and one officer, Lieutenant Jenkins, having fallen in the conflict. Later in the month of October, Sir Robert Sale, having been reinforced, marched in the direction of Tazeen, the force feeling its way cautiously through the defiles, occupying the hills on its flanks with skirmishers, and leaving parties for the protection of its baggage and rear at selected points. No enemy was seen till the advance and main body had halted in the Valley of Tazeen. From this valley another stretches out in a south-easterly direction, and on the sides and summits of the mountains, inclosing the latter, were observed bodies of the enemy; while another portion of their force prepared to dispute the posses-

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sion of a small conical hill which partly closes the entrance to the branching valley, and thus to bar the approach of the British force to a fortified spot called Mahomed Ufzul's fort, of which the insurgents had possession. They were, however, driven from the hill by the advanced guard under Colonel Monteith. The fort was then assailed, and after a feeble defence abandoned. Sir Robert Sale intended to establish here a depôt for his sick and wounded, and to adopt the place as a *point d'appui;* but the enemy continuing to occupy a nearly circular range of heights, and even occasionally to descend from them, it became necessary to dislodge them from those parts of the mountains from which they were able to command the British position, and inflict considerable annoyance, especially by night. This led to a series of skirmishes, which ended in the British commander completely accomplishing his object.

While the force of Sir Robert Sale occupied this position, a further attempt to terminate, by negotiation, the disputes with the disobedient chiefs was made under the auspices of Captain Macgregor. He was received by them with a profusion of pacific professions, and an agreement was concluded, but without a shadow of intention on the part of the chiefs to adhere to any part of it. In proof of this, they continued to harass the British detachment under Sir Robert Sale on its departure from Tazeen. The most serious annoyance received was on the 29th of October, on marching from Jug-

duluk in the direction of Gundamuck. Some loss in men was here sustained, and a very considerable one in baggage and camp equipage; but the detachment succeeded in gallantly forcing its way, though the difficulties of the ground, surrounded by terrific mountains, were almost insuperable. The labours encountered by the detachment, and the spirit in which they were sustained, will be best illustrated by quoting the language of its distinguished commander, who thus speaks of his men:—"Since leaving Kabool, they have been kept constantly on the alert by attacks by night and day; from the time of their arrival at Tazeen they have invariably bivouacked, and the safety of our positions has only been secured by unremitting labour, throwing up intrenchments, and very severe outpost duty; whilst each succeeding morning has brought its affair with a bold and active enemy, eminently skilful in the species of warfare to which their attempts have been confined, and armed with jezails, which have enabled them to annoy us at a range at which they could only be reached by our artillery. Though compelled, by the effects of my late wound, to witness these conflicts from a dooly, I must bear my unequivocal testimony to the gallantry of officers and men on every occasion of contact with the enemy, and especially in scaling the tremendous heights above Jugduluk."*

At Gundamuck the difficulties of Sir Robert

* Letter from Sir Robert Sale to Captain Grant, 30th October, 1841.

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Sale began to thicken, and amidst a variety of gloomy intelligence which reached him from various quarters, he learned that Jelalabad was menaced by the enemy from the direction of Lughman. To secure the possession of that important place, he resolved to march upon it forthwith. He entered
A.D. 1841. it on the 12th of November, having sustained considerable annoyance from plunderers. A party of these, who had the imprudence to follow the rear guard under Colonel Dennie into the plain, were sent abruptly back to the heights by a brilliant charge of cavalry, headed by Captain Oldfield and Lieutenant Mayne, before whom more than a hundred of the marauders fell.

Jelalabad was found invested on every side by hordes of enemies. The defences were weak, but Sir Robert Sale proceeded with characteristic vigour to improve them. In the meantime the enemy were active. They burned down a cantonment raised by the English at great expense in the preceding year, and under cover of trees and old buildings, kept up a fire of musketry against the walls at a short range, by which some loss was suffered. To get rid of this continued source of annoyance, a sortie was made on the 14th of November by a party under Lieutenant Colonel Monteith. The attempt was entirely successful, and a body of at least five thousand men were utterly dispersed by a force consisting of three hundred men of her Majesty's 13th, three hundred of the 35th Bengal native infantry, a hundred sappers and miners, two hundred

of the Khyber corps, a squadron of the 5th light cavalry, a few irregular horse, and three guns.

It was obvious that, though the enemy was dispersed for a time, their speedy and frequent return was to be expected; it was not less obvious that no early relief was to be looked for by the British force in Jelalabad. To diminish the consumption of provisions as far as was practicable was, under these circumstances, an indispensable measure of precaution; and with a view to this object, Sir Robert Sale proceeded to dismiss from the place the women and children, whose presence could only be embarrassing to the garrison, and dangerous to themselves, and all the male population, excepting shopkeepers, whose continued residence was to be desired. This clearance not only reduced the number of claimants for food, but had the effect of purging the city of suspicious characters, of whom there were many. The repose that followed the dispersion of the enemy was employed in carrying on the improvements in the defences with redoubled vigour. "We have availed ourselves of the pause," said Sir Robert Sale, "to put the walls into a state of defence, which will, I trust, enable us to defy the efforts of any Asiatic force, unaided by siege artillery."* Yet was there enough in the circumstances in which the brave garrison of Jelalabad was placed to have justified some shadow of despondency, had its noble commander been capable of entertaining such a

* Letter of Sir Robert Sale to Major Craigie, 18th November, 1841.

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feeling. "Two regiments, and the corps of sappers," he writes, "do not more than suffice to man these extensive walls, and great efforts are required of us. We need succours in every way; troops, treasure, provisions, and ammunition now, and a siege train, to enable us to retrieve things by active operations on the conclusion of the winter."* Thus did this eminent officer look forward through months of anxiety, destitution, and suffering, with feelings tinged with hopefulness, to the period when he trusted to be again able to take the field in vindication of his country's honour.

Before reaching Jelalabad, Sir Robert Sale had learned that all was not well at Kabool. While engaged in preparing for the defence of the former place, he received a summons to march the troops under his command immediately to the capital. This task he declined to attempt, and it would be unjust to give his reasons in any other than his own simple, lucid, and forcible language. "I beg to represent that the whole of my camp equipage has been destroyed; that the wounded and sick have increased to upwards of three hundred; that there is no longer a single depôt of provisions on the route, and the carriage of the force is not sufficient to bring on one day's rations with it. I have, at the same time, positive information that the whole country is in arms, and ready to oppose us in the defiles between this city and Cabool, while my am-

* Letter of Sir Robert Sale to Major Craigie, 13th of November, 1841.

munition is insufficient for more than two such contests as I should assuredly have to sustain for six days at least. With my present means I could not force the passes of either Jugduluk or Khoord Cabool; and even if the *débris* of my brigade did reach Cabool, I am given to understand that I should find the troops now garrisoning it without the means of subsistence. Under these circumstances, a regard for the honour and interest of our government compels me to adhere to my plan already formed of putting this place into a state of defence, and holding it, if possible, until the Cabool force falls back upon me, or succours arrive from Peshawur or India."* Personally, Sir Robert Sale must have wished to have been at Kabool, for his wife and daughter were there and exposed to danger; but he could not sacrifice an army to the gratification of his personal feelings.

There was, indeed, a fearful need of further military assistance at Kabool; but before entering into the particulars of the necessity, it will be convenient to state the positions of the forces of the allied powers in the vicinity of that place. The force at and near Kabool, in the beginning of October, had A. D. 18 consisted of her Majesty's 13th and 44th foot, the 5th, 35th, 37th, and 54th Bengal native infantry, the 5th Bengal light cavalry, a company of foot and a troop of horse artillery, two regiments of the Shah's infantry, a mountain train of artillery, with some others belonging to the Shah, and some

* Letter of Sir Robert Sale to Captain Paton, 15th of November, 1841.

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cavalry, both Hindostanee and Affghan, forming part also of the Shah's force. The Queen's 13th, the 35th and 37th Bengal native infantry, a squadron of the 5th cavalry, and some details of artillery and sappers, constituted the force of Sir Robert Sale; but the 37th had not gone forward with the rest of the force to Gundamuck, and subsequently to Jelalabad, but had been left in position at Khoord Kabool to keep open the communication. The force which remained at Kabool was divided between the Bala Hissar, the royal residence, which overlooked the town, and the cantonments, lying about three miles from it. Some British officers resided within the town, and parts of the commissariat establishments were within its walls. Much of this arrangement appears to have been injudicious, but there seems to have been an almost unanimous determination to shut the ears against all intimations of danger, and indulge in a luxurious dream of safety equal to that enjoyed within the Mahratta ditch.

A. D. 1841. The morning of the 2nd November dissipated the spell—it broke with signals of violence and alarm. The city was in a state of commotion; the shops were plundered, the houses of the British officers attacked, and their servants everywhere insulted and threatened. Among the first of the houses assaulted were those of Sir Alexander Burnes and of Captain Johnston, paymaster of the Shah's forces. It is believed, that had the former officer acted with decision, the outbreak might have been at once checked; but Sir Alexander Burnes forbade

his guard to fire on the insurgents,* and preferred trying the effect of addressing to them a speech. What were the arguments by which he sought to soothe into calmness the excited passions of desperate men can never be known, for his powers of moral suasion failed, and he perished in a parade of magnanimous forbearance. With him fell his brother, Lieutenant Burnes, of the Bombay army, and Lieutenant William Broadfoot, of the Bengal European regiment—an officer whom all reports unite in eulogizing, and whose life was dearly paid for by his assailants, six of whom met destruction from his hand before it was paralyzed by death. The sepoys who formed the guard of Sir Alexander Burnes and of the treasury fought nobly, so soon as they were permitted to fight, and manifested the firmness and fidelity which the native soldier has so often displayed in the cause of the government whose "salt he eats;" but they were overpowered by the numbers which unthrifty delay had permitted to accumulate, and with their lives they surrendered their trust. The Shah's treasury, as well as the residence of Sir Alexander Burnes, were plundered; every man, woman, and child found in either massacred; and, finally, the buildings fired. The whole city was now in a state of insurrection, and it was dangerous for an European countenance to be anywhere visible. Some British officers were wounded, and others very narrowly escaped. Captain Sturt, of the engineers, was assailed in the precincts of the palace, and

* Lieutenant Eyre's Military Operations at Kabool, p. 21.

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stabbed in three places by a young man whose dress indicated respectability of position, and who immediately escaped into an adjacent building, the gates of which, as soon as he had passed them, were closed. Captain Laurence, military secretary to the British Envoy, while riding to deliver a message to the Shah, was attacked by an Affghan of ferocious appearance, who aimed at him a furious blow. The officer avoided it, and putting spurs to his horse, escaped the fate which had that morning overtaken some of his brethren in arms; he was immediately afterwards fired on by a considerable body of the insurgents, but succeeded in reaching the palace in safety.

While such events were in progress, it cannot be supposed that the authorities, either native or British, were altogether inactive. The Shah dispatched one of his sons with some Affghan retainers, a Hindostanee corps in his service called Campbell's regiment, and two guns, to check the insurrectionary movement; but this force was beaten back by the insurgents, and it was not without difficulty that they succeeded in bringing off their guns. Early in the day an order had been dispatched to Brigadier Shelton, who commanded a force encamped at a place called Seeah Sung, a short distance from the capital, to march a part of his troops to the Bala Hissar, or royal citadel, where the Shah resided, and the remainder into the British cantonment. Orders were likewise forwarded for the return of the 37th Bengal native infantry, who were posted

at Khoord Kabool. Brigadier Shelton's force arrived, but, as it appears, to little purpose: "the day," says an officer on the spot, "was suffered to pass without any thing being done demonstrative of British energy and power."* Early on the morning of the 3rd, the troops from Khoord Kabool arrived under the command of Major Griffiths, having had to fight their way for the whole distance with a body of several thousand Ghilzies who hung upon them. They, nevertheless, succeeded in preserving nearly the whole of their baggage, as well as in bringing in all their wounded, and they arrived at Kabool in as perfect order as if the march "had been a mere parade movement."† But, though thus reinforced, nothing decisive seems to have been attempted, and this day passed much like the preceding one. A few desultory efforts were made, but no connected or sustained plan either for attack or defence appears to have existed. In consequence the insurgents gradually gathered strength, and obtained possession of post after post in quick succession. A tower occupied by Captain Trevor, of the 5th cavalry, a fort within musket-shot of it, used partly as a storehouse by the Shah's commissariat, partly as a residence for Brigadier Anquetil, and a house at a short distance from the fort inhabited by Captain Troup,

* Eyre's Military Operations at Kabool, p. 26.

† Lady Sale's Journal, p. 45.

Lieut. Eyre says, "A more orderly march was never made under such trying circumstances, and it reflects the highest credit upon Major Griffiths and all concerned."—Military Operations, p. 35.

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brigade major of the Shah's forces, were all defensible posts, and were for a time defended. They were lost for want of ammunition, for a fresh supply of which, pressing application was made, but without effect. A considerable number of chiefs who remained faithful to the cause of the allies had proceeded to the house held by Captain Trevor with a tender of assistance. That they were sincere is placed beyond question by two facts. One of the chiefs offered his son as a hostage for his good faith, and actually placed him in the hands of the British officer; and further, when all hope was lost from the non-arrival of assistance, several of the party escorted Captain Trevor and his family to the British cantonments. Neither Brigadier Anquetil nor Captain Troup was present at the fort and house which they respectively occupied, and the task of defending the fort fell to Captain Mackenzie. He held it till he had not a shot to fire, and then cut his way through the enemy to the British lines, which he reached, though not without being wounded.*

* Captain Mackenzie described his adventures on this occasion in a letter to Lieutenant Eyre, published by the latter officer in his account of the military operations at Kabool, and the account is so lively and graphic, that a portion of it may properly be quoted, for the sake of the vivid impression which it gives of the incidents of a retreat by night through a country occupied by an enemy. "Before we had proceeded half a mile, the rear missed the advance, upon whom a post of the enemy had begun to fire. All my regulars had crept ahead with the Juzailchees, and I found myself alone with a chuprassee and two suwars, in the midst of a helpless and wailing crowd of women and children. Riding on by myself, along a narrow lane, to try and pick out the road, I found myself

It is not easy—perhaps it never will be practicable —to ascertain precisely the causes of the unfortunate want of energy which at this time pervaded the counsels and movements of the British. The chief military command was held by General Elphinstone, an officer of high character, but considerably advanced in years, and severely shaken by disease. The same apathy which had led to the loss of the tower and fort on the 3rd of November continued A.D. 1841

suddenly surrounded by a party of Affghans, whom at first I took to be own Juzailchees, and spoke to them as such. They quickly undeceived me, however, by crying out 'Feringhee hust,' 'here is a European,' and attacking me with swords and knives. Spurring my horse violently, I wheeled round, cutting from right to left, for I fortunately had my own sword drawn previous to the surprise. My blows, by God's mercy, parried the greater part of theirs, and I was lucky enough to cut off the hand of my most outrageous assailant. In short, after a desperate struggle, during which I received two slight sabre cuts, and a blow on the back of my head, from a fellow whose sword turned in his hand, which knocked me half off my horse, I escaped out of the crush, passing unhurt through two volleys of musketry from the whole picket, which, by that time, had become alarmed, and had turned out. They pursued me, but I soon distanced them, crossing several fields at speed, and gaining a road which I perceived led round the western end of the Shah's garden. Proceeding cautiously along, to my horror I perceived my path again blocked up by a dense body of Affghans. Retreat was impossible; so putting my trust in God, I charged into the midst of them, hoping that the weight of my horse would clear my way for me, and reserving my sword cuts for my last struggle. It was well that I did so, for by the time that I had knocked over some twenty fellows, I found that they were my own Juzailchees. If you ever experienced sudden relief from a hideous nightmare, you may imagine my feelings for the moment. With these worthies, after wandering about for some time, and passing unchallenged by a sleepy post of the enemy, I reached the cantonments."

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to reign on the 4th, and with similar disastrous results. Ensign Warren, of the 5th Bengal native infantry, who, with a small force, occupied the fort of the British commissariat, reported that he was pressed by the enemy, and that, unless reinforced, he could not long hold out. On the possession or the loss of this fort depended the solution of the question whether the British army at Kabool should be fed or starved; yet, strange as it must appear, the answer to Ensign Warren's communication was the despatch of a small force to assist him in evacuating a place which it was so essential to retain. The attempt to reach the fort failed, as did another subsequently made, and both were attended by severe loss. In the meantime, intelligence of the intention of abandoning the fort having reached Captain Boyd, the chief commissariat officer of the British army, he hastened, in conjunction with Captain Johnson, who held the same situation in the army of the Shah, to lay before the general the fatal consequences that must result from such a step, representing that the place contained supplies of grain, rum, medicine, clothing, and other stores, of the value of four lacs of rupees—that the immense loss which would be sustained by the abandonment of them was not the worst effect to be apprehended, but that such an act would greatly add to the confidence of the enemy, while it would involve the almost certain destruction of the whole British force, there not being within the cantonments a stock of provisions equal to more than two days' consump-

tion, while no hope could be entertained, under the circumstances that existed, of procuring supplies elsewhere. The representation was too powerful to be resisted, though it cannot but excite surprise that it should have been required, and it was determined to direct the commander of the commissariat fort to persist in its defence. A further communication from that officer announced that his difficulties increased—that the enemy were preparing for an attack, and were, as he believed, engaged in mining one of the towers—that the temper of his garrison was bad—that some of his men had made their escape over the wall, and that, with reference to all circumstances, he could not maintain himself many hours unless reinforced. The answer to this communication was, that he should be reinforced by two o'clock in the morning.

The gate of the commissariat fort was commanded by another fort called Mahomed Shureef's, and the possession of this latter fort was, consequently, deemed requisite to ensure success to any attempt to relieve the former. Some information as to its means of defence was obviously desirable, and a man was dispatched to gather such as hasty observation might furnish. On his return, he reported that about twenty men were seated without Mahomed Shureef's fort, smoking and talking; but, from what he could learn, the force within was very small, and unable to resist a sudden attack. The tidings brought by this messenger produced no result but a determination to send another, who,

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returning, corroborated the report of his predecessor. Still nothing was done—consultation and discussion consumed the hours, albeit at best too few, which remained for affording effectual succour to Ensign Warren, and saving from the grasp of the enemy his incalculably valuable charge. At last it was resolved that in the morning a detachment should be sent off; but, just as it was on the point of marching, news was received that Ensign Warren had arrived in cantonments with his garrison, having abandoned the fort, and by consequence surrendered all the means of subsistence on which the army could rely. The enemy had set fire to the gate, and the garrison were led out through a hole in the wall. This was a blow at the British cause in Kabool before which it reeled. The train was fired, and an explosion could not be far distant which might be expected to involve in common ruin those who had entered Affghanistan in pride and triumph, to change its rulers and its laws, and him who owed to their arms a diadem which now trembled on his brow. "It no sooner," says Lieutenant Eyre, "became generally known that the commissariat fort, upon which we were dependent for supplies, had been abandoned, than one universal feeling of indignation pervaded the garrison; nor can I describe the impatience of the troops, but especially the native portion, to be led out for its recapture—a feeling that was by no means diminished by their seeing the Affghans crossing and recrossing the road between the commissariat fort and the gate of the Shah

Bagh, laden with the provisions on which had depended our ability to make a protracted defence."* Well, indeed, might indignation and impatience prevail; and so strongly were they expressed, that at last it was resolved to make an attempt against Mahomed Shureef's fort, the practicability of capturing which had occasioned so much solemn discussion, during which all the stores were lost. Two guns, under Lieutenant Eyre, were to open a fire on the fort, under cover of which a party, under Major Swaine, was to advance and blow open the gate with a bag of powder. The guns opened their fire, and continued it until their supply of ammunition was nearly exhausted; but, from some cause, the party which was to force the gate remained still, without attempting to perform their allotted task, and the whole were recalled into cantonments. "Thus," remarks Lieutenant Eyre, "the enemy† enjoyed their triumph undiminished, and great was the rage of the sepoys of the 37th native infantry, who had evinced the utmost eagerness to be led out, at this disappointment of their hopes."‡

* Military Operations in Kabool, p. 58.

† Military Operations in Kabool, p. 59.

‡ This movement against Mahomed Shureef's fort vividly recalls to the mind the feat performed by the King of France and his army of forty thousand, immortalized in a familiar distich. Lieutenant Eyre appears to lay the blame on the officer in command of the storming party. He says:—"Major Swayne, instead of rushing forward with his men, as had been agreed, had in the meantime remained stationary, under cover of the wall by the road side. The general, who was watching our proceedings from the gateway, observing that the gun-ammunition was running short, and that the troops had failed to take advantage of the best

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On the following day another attempt was made upon the embarrassing fort, which would seem to have been erected for no other purpose but to confuse the counsels and baffle the efforts of the British force. At an early hour three iron nine-pounders were brought to bear upon the north-east bastion, and two howitzers upon the contiguous curtain. The firing was maintained for about two hours, during which the artillerymen were exposed to the fire of the enemy's sharp-shooters stationed on a couple of high towers which completely commanded the battery. A practicable breach being effected, a storming party, consisting of three companies, one of her Majesty's 44th, one of the 5th native infantry, and one of the 37th native infantry, marched forward and speedily carried the place. The death-throe of this redoubtable fort was far less violent than might have been expected from the degree of tenacity attributed to it. About one hundred and fifty men succeeded in planting the British flag upon it; but it is to be lamented that the gallant officer, Ensign Raban, of the Queen's 44th, who first waved it on the summit of the breach, was shot through the heart while in the act of thus displaying the signal of his country's triumph.

The cavalry pursued the fugitives from the place,

opportunity for advancing, recalled us into cantonments." Lady Sale, no incompetent military critic, though of the gentler sex, seems, on the other hand, to attribute the chief blame to the general. She says:—"The troops retired by order of General Elphinstone, to my no small surprise, for the enemy had begun to run out from a broken bastion; but when they found our people retreating, they took courage, and no more left the fort."

and the hills were speedily covered with the enemy's horse issuing forth for their protection. A severe encounter took place, but the enemy threw out such vast numbers that no serious impression could be made on them, and as the day closed, both parties retired from the conflict.

For some days after this affair, shot and shells were thrown from the Bala Hissar into the town, but with little effect, beyond the alarm which they were calculated to create. Plans were suggested for recapturing the commissariat fort, and so much of the stores as yet remained in it; but they were suggested only, not acted upon.*

The enemy appeared on the heights in great numbers, and with great boldness, and little was done or attempted that was calculated to check this feeling in them. The very debilitated state of General Elphinstone's health, at this time, rendered it necessary that he should have the assistance of a coadjutor, possessed of greater bodily vigour, and

* In the lively and interesting narrative of Lady Sale, the following passage occurs:—"Paton [assistant quartermaster-general] and Bellew [deputy assistant quartermaster-general] meet in council with Sturt [her son-in-law, and chief officer of engineers], at nine, most evenings, at our house. To-day [6th November] arrangements were made for carrying the Shah's garden and the commissariat fort by daybreak, every thing being so clearly explained, that even I understood it as well as hemming the handkerchief I was making. * * * Plans were sketched, and all the minutiæ written out, so that the general might have no questions to ask. It is now midnight, and no reply has been sent from him, though an answer was to have come to say whether the work should be done or not." From subsequent passages in the journal, it seems that the general hesitated—then approved the plan—then abandoned it.

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accordingly Brigadier Shelton, the officer second in command, was called from the Bala Hissar to cantonments. His presence was followed by increased activity; but the credit of the change appears to be due to Sir William Macnaghten, towards whom it is a bare act of justice to state, that whatever of promptitude and energy was displayed in the higher departments of affairs at Kabool, during these unhappy scenes, seems traceable to him. The enemy had taken possession of some forts, one of which, called the Rika Bashee fort, was situated directly opposite an inclosure, known as the Mission Compound, at the north-east angle of the British cantonments, and within musket-shot of the works.* Into these they poured their fire, and a party of sharp-shooters, who found cover among some ruins in the vicinity, picked off with deadly certainty the British artillerymen while engaged in working their guns. Sir William Macnaghten strongly urged the necessity of dislodging the enemy from this post, but would probably not have succeeded in obtaining the consent of the military authorities to the task being attempted, had he not offered to take on himself the entire responsibility of the act. Thereupon the general ordered a force to be provided to storm the fort. It consisted of the Queen's 44th regiment, the 37th native infantry, two horse artillery guns, one mountain-train gun, and a considerable body of native forces. Captain Bellew undertook to blow open the main gate, but from acci-

* Eyre's Military Operations in Kabool.

dent or error he missed it, and instead, blew in the wicket gate at the side, affording an aperture of such small dimensions that not more than two or three men could enter abreast, and these were compelled to stoop. Under these disadvantages, a handful of the assailants got in; among these were Colonel Mackerell, of her Majesty's 44th; Lieutenant Cadett, of the same regiment; Lieutenant Hawtrey, of the 37th Bengal native infantry, and Lieutenant Bird, of the Shah's force. Though the number of those who had passed the gate was small, it was sufficient to spread dismay among the garrison, who, not doubting that the whole British force would follow, rushed, in consternation, through a gate on the side of the fort opposite to that which had been carried. Unhappily, at this moment a charge of cavalry round the corner of the fort spread panic among the troops before the gate; they turned, and it became, says one of the narrators of the event, "a scene of *sauve qui peut.*" The officers in vain exerted themselves to bring back the men to their duty; and when Major Scott, of the 44th, after resorting without effect to command, expostulation, and entreaty, called on volunteers to follow him, the call was answered by only a single private.* All would now have been lost but for the iron perseverance of Brigadier Shelton, who, amidst the hot fire of the

* The name of this man, which well deserves record, was Stuart or Steward, for it is given differently by different narrators. It is gratifying to know that, on the report of his fidelity reaching the ears of Sir William Macnaghten, he was, at the entreaty of the envoy, promoted serjeant.

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enemy and the wild rush of the recreant troops, stood firm and unmoved—striving, by the exercise of his authority, and still more by his animating example, to save the British name from the disgrace impending over it. He at last succeeded in rallying the men, who advanced once more to the attack, and once more wavered, although now the fire of the guns from the cantonments, and a demonstration on the part of the British cavalry, had checked the career of the Affghan horse. But the hesitation was overcome by the energy of the brigadier. The assailants pressed forward, and the fort was won.

The situation of the small British party who had entered the fort, and remained within it while their comrades were shrinking from their duty without, was a subject of intense and painful interest. Lieutenants Cadett and Hawtry had returned, to endeavour to bring up the men, but the fate of the rest was to be ascertained. The little band, it appears, on finding themselves deserted, had hastily shut the gate through which the greater part of the garrison had escaped, and secured the chain with a bayonet. The unhappy circumstances, however, prevailing on the opposite side, encouraged the enemy to return, which they did in considerable numbers; and having succeeded in removing the bayonet, the gate was re-opened, and the foe rushed in. Their fury was exercised without restraint upon Colonel Mackerell, whom they hacked in a frightful manner. Lieutenant Bird, with two sepoys of the 37th, found shelter in a stable, which they

barricaded. One of the sepoys was killed, but Lieutenant Bird and the other defended themselves for a considerable period—maintaining a fire which knocked down all who ventured to approach their retreat, with a precision proportioned to the closeness of the combat. In this way more than thirty of the enemy met their death; and when the fort was gained, the gallant pair were found by their companions unharmed. The rescue, indeed, was at the last moment, for the ammunition of the besieged combatants was reduced to a stock of five cartridges.

The loss of the British on this occasion amounted to two hundred killed and wounded. Captain McCrae, of the 44th, was cut down in the gateway on the first rush, and Captain Westmacott, of the 37th, was shot while engaged in skirmishing without. The fate of Colonel Mackerell has already been mentioned.

Several adjacent forts were, on the fall of Rika Bashee, abandoned by the enemy. In one some grain was found—a most welcome discovery. No time was lost in beginning to transport it to a safer spot, but there was not time to remove the whole before nightfall. A guard was applied for to protect the remainder, but refused; and in the morning, as might have been anticipated, it was gone.

On the 13th November, the enemy again appearing in great force on the heights, and firing into the British cantonments, a force was sent out to disperse them. This movement, like the attack on the Rika

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Bashee fort, was suggested by Sir William Macnaghten, who, on this occasion also, was required to take upon himself the entire responsibility attached to it. There was another and more lamentable point of resemblance between the two occasions. On both, the infantry, European and native, manifested an unsteadiness not to be expected. The fortune of the day, however, was with the British, and a gun was taken from the enemy. Another might have been captured, but it was protected by a hot fire from a body of Affghan infantry, and the 44th could not be prevailed upon to incur the danger attendant on carrying it off. The fear of the Europeans was shared by the native troops. The capture of the gun being thus frustrated, Lieutenant Eyre, with the horse artillery gunner, descended into the ravine where it lay, and spiked it.

The feeble hold which Shah Shoojah and his allies had on Kabool was manifested simultaneously in almost every part of the country. About the A.D. 1841. middle of November, Major Pottinger, political agent in Kohistan, accompanied by Lieutenant Haughton, adjutant of a Goorka regiment in the Shah's service, and a single soldier of that regiment, arrived in Kabool, after undergoing extraordinary hardships, and encountering great danger in effecting a safe retreat from the scene of his official functions. His fort in Lughman had been attacked, his assistant, Lieutenant Rattray, murdered, and himself forced to withdraw to Charekar. There, however, he found no permanent resting-place.

Charekar was closely invested by the enemy—the British outposts attacked, and in succession carried. In defending them, Captain Codrington, the officer in command, was killed, and Major Pottinger wounded. The garrison at Charekar suffered fearfully from want of water; it being necessary after a time to dispense this prime necessary of existence in quantities equal only to half a wine-glass for each man, and finally the supply failed altogether. Desertion had been for some time going on, and open mutiny followed. On Lieutenant Haughton attempting to seize two deserters, who had returned apparently for the purpose of persuading their comrades to follow their example, he was cut down by a jemadar of artillery, who repeated the blow while the officer lay on the ground, and then rushed out, followed by nearly all the Mahometans in the place. The troops who remained were completely disorganized; and from this post, also, it became necessary to retreat. Proceeding towards Kabool, the toils and perils of the road were so dispiriting, that all the fugitives dropt off excepting the single soldier who, as already mentioned, arrived with the two officers at the British cantonments, where, says Lieut. Eyre, "they were received by their brethren in arms as men risen from the dead." Other officers exposed to similar dangers were less fortunate. Doctor Grant, a surgeon, who, like many members of his profession in India, had honourably distinguished himself by services not falling within the routine of his proper duties, departed with Major Pottinger and Lieu-

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tenant Haughton from Charekar; but shortly afterwards disappeared, from what cause was unknown; and two officers stationed at a fort in Kohistan, about twelve miles from Kabool, Lieutenant Maule and Lieutenant Whelan, after being deserted by their men, were barbarously murdered.

The chapter of disasters was further swelled by the surprise and destruction of a detachment proceeding under the command of Captain Woodburn, of the Shah's service, from Ghuznee to Kabool. At Gundamuck, the force left by Sir Robert Sale on his departure fell rapidly into disorder; the larger portion deserted to the enemy, and the rest refused to remain at Gundamuck; with them the officer in charge, Captain Burn, was compelled to retire to Jelalabad, leaving two guns and much baggage behind them. At Pesh Boolak, between the Khyber Pass and Jelalabad, Captain Ferris, of the Shah's service, found himself surrounded by the enemy, destitute of ammunition, and in danger of being abandoned by his troops. Some of them had gone over the walls, but were cut up by the enemy; and the fear of meeting the same fate was believed to be the chief motive by which the rest were deterred from following their example. Having no prospect of relief, he resolved to make an attempt to cut his way through the enemy, and he succeeded; but the abandonment of the fort involved the loss of treasure to the amount of thirty-eight thousand rupees, as well as some stores and private property.

At Kabool, the state of affairs remained for a

period of several days almost unchanged in any respect. The same indecision and inactivity which had heretofore prevailed in the British cantonments continued to exist; and the enemy appear not to have been without a due share of the same unmilitary qualities. Nothing was done or attempted on either side. On the 22nd of November both parties A.D. 1841. seemed suddenly roused to the recollection that they were in the position of belligerents. A village called Behmauroo, from which the English drew some supplies, was occupied by the enemy; and Major Swayne, of the 5th native infantry, was dispatched, with a small force of horse and foot, and one gun, to dispossess them. A second gun was afterwards ordered to his support. The village was to have been stormed, but no attempt was made to carry this intention into effect. The officer in command, according to Lieutenant Eyre, "would neither go forward nor retire,"* but continued for several hours to maintain a useless fire on the houses in the village; the infantry of the party being under cover, but the cavalry and artillery exposed to the fire of the enemy without the opportunity of effecting any object of importance adequate to the risk incurred and the loss sustained. In the evening Brigadier Shelton joined them, with a reinforcement under Colonel Oliver, but no more daring or decisive course was the result; and, finally, in the language of Lady Sale, "The troops returned, having done nothing."† It was resolved on the 23rd to repair

* Military Operations, p. 112. † Journal, p. 119.

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the error of the preceding day, as far as reparation can be said to be practicable in cases where the loss sustained is not so much in physical or material strength as in confidence and character. At two o'clock in the morning, Brigadier Shelton marched out with seventeen companies of infantry,* consisting of five of Her Majesty's 44th, under Captain Leighton, six of the 5th native infantry, under Lieutenant-Colonel Oliver, six of the 37th native infantry, under Major Kershaw, of Her Majesty's 13th; one hundred sappers, under Lieutenant Laing; one squadron of the 5th light cavalry, under Captain Bold; one squadron of irregular horse, under Lieutenant Walker; a hundred men of the corps known as Anderson's horse, and a single gun. The gun was with great difficulty got to its position on a knoll, commanding an inclosure in the village, which, from the fires perceived in it, was judged to be the principal bivouac of the enemy. The gun, as soon as practicable, opened, and the enemy, in some alarm, retreated from the open space to the shelter afforded by the houses and towers, from whence they kept up a sharp fire of juzails. The brigadier was strongly urged to storm the village under cover of the darkness (there being no moon), and before the enemy had time to recover from the panic into which they had been thrown; but the opportunity was suffered to pass without profit.

* Lady Sale calls them "weak companies;" and adds, "I believe many of them did not muster above forty men."—Journal, p. 122.

"Both officers and men," says Lady Sale, "were most anxious to be led against the village, to take it by storm, but the brigadier would not hear of it."* At length, as day dawned, the caution of the commander gave way. The fire from the village had slackened, and, it was believed, from the failure of ammunition. Parties of the enemy were observed hurrying away, and, according to the belief of Lieutenant Eyre, not above forty men remained in the place. A storming party was formed under Major Swayne: but mischance frustrated the effects of a movement too long postponed. The officer commanding the storming party missed his way, and instead of arriving at the principal gate, which was now open, he came to a small wicket which was barricaded, and believing himself unable to force it, he withdrew his men under cover,† where they remained until recalled. In the meantime vast numbers of the enemy issued from the city, and covered a hill immediately opposite to that occupied by the British force, and separated from it only by a narrow gorge.

* Journal, p. 122.

† Different representations are made as to the practicability of Major Swayne's forcing this wicket. Lieutenant Eyre seems to acquit the officer of blame upon this point, observing that he "arrived at a small kirkhee, or wicket, which was barricaded, and *which he had no means of forcing, so that he was obliged* to cover his men and himself as well as he could."—Military Operations, page 117. Lady Sale's account is somewhat less favourable. She, after narrating the arrival of Major Swayne at the wicket, thus continues: "which (the wicket) he reported himself unable to force, though this was afterwards done by a few men pulling it down with their hands and kicking at it."—Journal, p. 123.

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Lieutenant Walker, with his irregular horse, had been dispatched to cut off the fugitives from the city, but the plain was now swept by hordes of cavalry, who evidently designed to perform the same duty with regard to Lieutenant Walker. He was therefore recalled. The abandonment of the attempt to storm had afforded opportunity for throwing reinforcements into the village as well as supplies of ammunition, and thus the purpose for which the troops had marched out of cantonments was irreparably frustrated. Major Kershaw, with three companies of the 37th, being left in the position first taken by the British force, the brigadier marched with the remainder of the troops, and his gun, to oppose the enemy on the opposite height. Here his disposition of his force is stated by military authorities to have been singularly injudicious. Skirmishers were brought forward to the brow of the hill: the rest of the infantry were formed into two squares, supported by his cavalry, but the whole exposed to the fire of the enemy, which was delivered from behind hillocks and other defences. But worse even than defective generalship was the sunken spirit of the men. The skirmishers could with difficulty be kept to their posts, and when a daring party of the enemy descended the gorge, and availing themselves of such cover as they could find, crept gradually up the hill on which the British force was posted, they gave way. Rewards, of an amount magnificent in the eyes of a private soldier, were offered for the capture of the enemy's flag, but in vain. The endea-

vour to lead to a charge was fruitless, as though the appeal had been made to men of wood. Several officers advanced to the front, and pelted the enemy with stones, the men looking on.* The enemy made a dash at the British gun, and the cavalry were ordered to charge for its protection, but neither the command nor the example of their officers could induce them to stir.† The gun was captured, the artillery-men fighting gallantly in defence of it, though unsupported, and two of them were killed. The first square of the British infantry was now in flight. The second kept its position, and in its rear the flying troops were with some difficulty rallied by their officers. The reappearance of firmness was not without effect upon the enemy's party, whose ardour was further diminished by a casualty which had befallen one of their chiefs, and abandoning the gun, they made off with the limber and horses. The conflict was renewed, and for some time maintained; but a second attack from the enemy similar to that which not long before had caused the British in-

* The names of these brave leaders of men unworthy to be commanded by them must not be passed over. They were Captains Mackintosh, Mackenzie, Troup, and Leighton, and Lieutenant Laing. The officers first and last named were killed on this ill-fated day.

† In naming the cavalry officers thus honourably distinguished from their cowardly followers, it is gratifying to find several natives among the gallant band. It consisted of Captains Bott and Collyer, of the 5th light cavalry; Lieutenant Wallace, of the irregular horse; Russular, Ishmael Khan, Jemadar Syud, Mahomed Syud, and Muzee Museer Beg, of Anderson's horse.

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fantry, European and native alike, to turn in disgraceful flight, was made by the enemy with the same result. No effort could recall the men into action, nor even prevail on them to retire in order. They ran in the most outrageous confusion, pursued by the enemy, who destroyed them in vast numbers. The gun, for which on its rescue fresh horses and limber were procured, was overturned and lost; the wounded were for the most part left on the field, to be hacked and hewed by the weapons of their ferocious enemy, and nothing was wanting to render disaster complete and overwhelming. A fire opened on the pursuers by part of the Shah's force, a charge made by Lieutenant Hardyman, with a fresh troop of cavalry, and the extraordinary conduct of one of the Affghan chiefs, who, in the heat of pursuit, suddenly halted and led off his followers, favoured the progress of the flying; but for the help thus afforded, scarcely one of those who went forth to capture the village of Behmauroo would have returned. Lieutenant Walker, while charging with Lieutenant Hardyman, at the head of a few of his horsemen whom he had rallied, received a mortal wound. Colonel Oliver, Captain Mackintosh, and Lieutenant Laing, were also left dead on the field. The three companies of the 37th native infantry, who remained with Major Kershaw, do not seem to have manifested any portion of that craven spirit which unhappily pervaded the rest of the British force. They were hard pressed throughout the day, and

were among the last to leave the hill. One company returned with a naick* and two privates only.†

A result so fatal, and withal so dishonourable, as that which befel the movement of Brigadier Shelton, cannot be passed over without some attempt to trace its causes; and the views of Lieutenant Eyre upon this subject appear to be countenanced by probability, as well as by the agreement of competent judges. He says, "No less than six great errors must present themselves even to the most unpractised military eye, each of which contributed in no slight degree to the defeat of our troops, opposed as they were by overwhelming numbers." The first and greatest of these mistakes, according to the opinion of the authority quoted, was the taking out a single gun. It appears that a General Order, issued under the government of the Marquis of Hastings, forbade less than two guns being taken into the field under any circumstances, or on any pretence whatever, where a second was available. Brigadier Shelton, it is stated, had intended to take another gun, but it was disabled, and was twice specially reported as incapable of being got ready for use before twelve o'clock on the disastrous day when the British, eight hours before midday, moved to defeat, destruction, and disgrace. The single gun was served by men worthy of the country whose honour they maintained, but their fire was

* Corporal. † Lady Sale's Journal, p. 131.

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constantly interrupted, as, after a time, the vent became so hot that it was impossible to continue it. The second error is the very obvious one of neglecting to take advantage of the temporary panic produced in the enemy, by storming the village before they had time to recover from it. "Had," says Lieutenant Eyre, "a storming party been led to the attack, under cover of the darkness, which would have nullified the advantage they," the defenders, "possessed, in being under cover, the place must inevitably have fallen into our hands, and thus would the principal object of the sally have been gained, and a good line of retreat secured for our troops in case of necessity." The third error enumerated by the writer above quoted, was the neglect of raising defences for the protection of the British troops on the hill; and this error he pronounces "so manifest as to be quite unaccountable." A party of sappers had accompanied the force for the purpose of forming a breastwork, but their services were not called into requisition, though it is said the expediency of resorting to them was specially pointed out at the time when the enemy were crowning the opposite height with multitudinous numbers, after the attack on the village had failed.* The good effects of raising

* "Shortly after this, it was suggested to raise a *sunya*, or stone breastwork, for the protection of the troops, wholly exposed to the distant fire of the enemy's juzails, but this proposition was not acted on."—Eyre, p. 118. It is not distinctly stated to whom this suggestion was offered, but it must be presumed that it was to the brigadier.

such a defence would not have been limited to the protection of the men, important as was this object; it would have enhanced the difficulties of the enemy in advancing, and have given confidence not only to those within the work, but also to those beyond it, from the knowledge that, if hard pressed, they could fall back upon a place of safety. Why such a precaution was neglected, it is now impossible to explain. The fourth error adverted to by Lieutenant Eyre, was the extraordinary step of forming the infantry into squares. The value of such a formation, when the object is to resist an attack by horsemen, is well understood. "All," says Lieutenant Eyre, "have heard of the British squares at Waterloo, which defied the repeated desperate onsets of Napoleon's choicest cavalry. At Behmauroo we formed squares to resist the distant fire of infantry, thus presenting a solid mass against the aim of, perhaps, the best marksmen in the world, the said squares being securely perched on the summit of a steep and narrow ridge, up which no cavalry could charge with effect." It thus appears that the men were disposed in the manner best adapted to oppose cavalry, there being no chance or possibility of any cavalry being brought against them, and, at the same time, in the manner best adapted to admit of their being picked off, in the largest numbers, by the species of force actually engaged against them. The astonishment expressed by the critic, whose views are here followed, is heightened, as well it might be, by the reflection that the officer who

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thus disposed his men had enjoyed, in his younger days, "the benefit of Peninsular experience." The disposition of the cavalry is mentioned by Lieutenant Eyre as the fifth of the great errors committed; this force, instead of being in the place where they might have been useful in protecting the line of communication with cantonments, and further have been able to advance readily to any point where their services would have been required, being hemmed in between bodies of infantry, and "exposed for several hours to a destructive fire from the enemy's juzails, on ground where, even under the most favourable circumstances, they could not have acted with effect." The arrangement seems to have been erroneous from the beginning, and at the disastrous close of the day the error became frightfully apparent, horse and foot being mixed up together in a way which increased the confusion, and rendered it irretrievable—it being alike impracticable, under such circumstances, either to rally the men, or to withdraw them in good order. The sixth and last error of this fatal day was the prolongation of the fight when nothing could be gained but some addition of loss and discredit to the vast mass of both previously accumulated. Lieutenant Eyre's judgment upon this point shall be given in his own words. "Shortly after our regaining possession of the gun, one of the brigadier's staff, Captain Mackenzie, feeling convinced that, from the temper of the troops, and from the impossibility of rectifying the false position

in which the force was placed, not only was success beyond hope, but that defeat, in its most disastrous shape, was fast approaching, proposed to the brigadier to endeavour to effect a retreat while it was yet in his power to do so with comparative impunity. His reply was, 'Oh no! we will hold the hill some time longer!' At that time, even if the slaughter of the soldiers, the loss of officers, the evident panic in our ranks, and the worse than false nature of our position, had not been sufficient to open all eyes as to the impossibility even of partial success (for the real object of the expedition, viz. the possession of the village of Behmauroo, had been, as it were, abandoned from the very first), the weakness and exhaustion of both men and horses, who were not only worn out by bodily fatigue, but suffering grievously from extreme thirst, and the debility attendant on long fasting, ought to have banished all idea of further delaying a movement in which alone lay the slightest chance of preserving to their country lives, by the eventual sacrifice of which, not even the only solace to the soldier in the hour of misfortune, the consciousness of unimpaired honour, was likely to be gained."* The simple facts of the case appear to be these. The troops marched out to capture the village of Behmauroo, and the object might have been achieved, but the opportunity was suffered to pass, and then the fight was

* Military Operations in Kabool. Lieutenant Eyre's statement of the six errors, noticed in the text, extends from page 127 to page 131.

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continued with no prospect but that of retreat before the enemy sooner or later, in good or in bad order as might happen, and seemingly without any purpose but the gratification of mere wilfulness. Nothing apparently could be worse than the military arrangements of the day, excepting it were the temper of part of the troops engaged. The deficiency of manhood in the latter completed the disasters which had their origin in the blunders of the former. It is beyond doubt that the troops could feel but little confidence in their leader, who, amidst an abundant display of personal courage, manifested no other quality of a good general; but for English soldiers to turn when called upon to advance is happily so rare an occurrence, that even with the partially extenuating circumstances above mentioned, the fact is calculated to inspire as much of astonishment as of disgust.* Instances of individual heroism there were, but with reference to all the occurrences of the day, he to whom his country's honour is dear must wish it were possible that all recollection of it could be obliterated.

The character of the British arms in Kabool was

* Lady Sale makes a statement which, if she were not misinformed, casts upon the brigadier an imputation worse than that of the loss of the battle. She says (pp. 131, 132), "Shelton tries to lay all the blame on the Sipahees (sepoys). He says they are timid, and that makes the Europeans timid also; but he has been told some home truths. On asking Captain Troup if he did not think that the 44th had behaved nobly, that officer plainly told him that he considered that all had behaved shamefully."

now low indeed, and no chance of safety for either civil or military seemed to exist but in negotiation. Sir William Macnaghten had repeatedly urged the military authorities to make some demonstration worthy of their country, and when they had yielded a reluctant consent, they had generally thrown on him the responsibility of the experiment. They appear now to have been not less strenuous in recommending him to negotiate than he had previously been in urging them to fight. The Kabool chiefs also manifesting an inclination for an exercise of diplomacy, a series of negotiations commenced, and was continued through many days. Any high degree of precision in relating the particulars of these negotiations being unattainable, it would be idle to enter into them at length. It is said that the proposals of the Affghans were, in the first instance, of such a nature as to call forth an unqualified and indignant rejection from the British envoy. Proposals more moderate and reasonable were subsequently submitted by him, and received by the chiefs with apparently a sincere desire for an amicable arrangement, the only exception to the seeming prevalence to such a feeling being furnished by Mahomed Akbar Khan, a son of Dost Mahomed Khan. The conditions were afterwards modified in various ways. At one time Shah Shoojah was to descend from the throne; at another he was to be maintained on condition of his daughters forming matrimonial engagements with some of the chiefs in opposition to his government, and of his aban-

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doning some offensive manifestations of pride which had given great offence. The Shah seems to have vacillated not less than his enemies; he consented to retain the sovereignty on the conditions specified, and afterwards withdrew his consent, thus leaving the negotiators to revert to the original terms. It mattered little, however, what terms were professedly adopted, for it was evident that the chiefs meant to observe none, but to avail themselves of every opportunity which might offer to counteract the British authorities by trick and fraud, exercises of ingenuity, which, in Affghan estimation, mark the highest triumph of human intellect. While these diplomatic proceedings were in progress, the British troops were suffering great privations, and had in prospect still greater. Various plans were suggested for their retreat without asking the aid or the permission of the Affghans, but all were beset with dangers and difficulties so great as to ensure their rejection. Under the terms of the convention, the British were entirely to evacuate Affghanistan, surrendering the fortresses which they still held therein, and their march was to be facilitated by a supply of beasts of burden, to be furnished by the Affghans. These, however, were not provided, and almost every day brought some new experiment on the patience of the British envoy. Affecting distrust, or perhaps really feeling it from consciousness that they were themselves unworthy of trust, the Affghan chiefs demanded the delivery of the guns and ammunition of the British force.

This was conceded, and an officer was sent to select such as might appear to be the most desirable.* Hostages were required and given. The Affghans demanded that Brigadier Shelton should be one, but, as Lieutenant Eyre states, the brigadier "having expressed a decided objection to undertake the duty," the demand was not insisted on. But it was not in the diplomacy of this unhappy period that the British name met with its deepest humiliation. While negotiations, ever shifting and never ending, were in progress, the countrymen of Clive, and Laurence, and Coote, and Lake, and Wellesley, were miserably throwing away that military character which those great men had raised, and which had been far more efficacious in raising and maintaining the British empire in the East than all other agencies of human origin.

The English in India, while pursuing a career on the whole of unparalleled brilliancy, had yet received occasional checks; they had sustained reverses, but down to this miserable epoch they had met them like men. Now, the spirit which had borne the British standard triumphant through so many fields of carnage—which had so often planted it on the summit of the breach choked with the bodies of those who had fallen in the attempt to

* This zealous officer displayed far more avidity of acquisition than judgment in choosing those articles which were most likely to be useful to those whom he served. He packed and carried away a large pile of eight-inch shells, which, in the hands of the chiefs, would be mere lumber, the mortars for throwing them being at Jelalabad.

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bear it thither—the spirit displayed by the officer who, marching to the relief of Trichinopoly, entered it in triumph, supported by two of his men, because unable to support himself;* by the disabled and suffering man, and his array of sick and wounded, whose unexpected appearance at Mulwagul turned the fortune of the day, and saved a British force from destruction;† and by the humble serjeant who, with a handful of men, maintained, against an overwhelming force, a miserable fort till it crumbled around him into a shapeless heap of rubbish‡—that spirit seemed to have departed from the British soldier in Kabool. The rich heritage of glory bequeathed to him by his predecessors in arms—the fruit of toils and struggles innumerable in every part of the world—was forgotten or despised, and a mean regard for personal safety, which tended to defeat itself, usurped the place of the noble and unshrinking endurance which had so long been classed among the prominent characteristics of his countrymen.

The defence of Mahomed Shereef's fort, which seemed destined to be a never-ending source of annoyance and discredit, furnished occasion for a display of pusillanimity far more disgraceful than the blunders which preceded its capture. The enemy were very desirous of regaining possession, and resorted to various modes of attack for the purpose. In imitation of the English, they attempted to blow open

* See vol. i. p. 271. † See vol. i. pp. 562, 563.
‡ See vol. i. pp. 566, 567.

the gate with powder, but of the proper management of this operation they seem to have been entirely ignorant; the powder exploded, but the gate was unharmed. They next commenced mining one of the towers, but Lieutenant Sturt, under cover of the night, entered their mine and blew it up. The garrison were so much alarmed by these attempts, that they were not deemed trustworthy, and a change was consequently made. The new garrison consisted of one company of the Queen's 44th, under Lieutenant Gray, and one company of the 37th Bengal infantry, under Lieutenant Hawtrey. In order to destroy the enemy's mine, it had been necessary to open a passage near the walls, and this opening was, when the work was performed, secured by barricading. Through this defence, a party of the enemy, who had crept up, discharged a few shots, and Lieutenant Gray was slightly wounded. He proceeded to cantonments to get his wound dressed, and the men of the 44th, immediately on his departure, prepared for flight. Lieutenant Hawtrey used every possible exertion to withhold them, but in vain; they precipitated themselves over the walls, and were soon followed by the sepoys of the 37th, who previously were disposed to stand to their duty. Two of the latter body, indeed, were left dead in the fort, but not a man of the 44th. The enemy of course took possession of the fort. The bazaar village was garrisoned by a party of the 44th, who, on observing the flight of their comrades from Mahomed Shereef's

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fort, were about to follow their example, but were stopped by their officers. After this manifestation, a guard of sepoys was stationed at the entrance of the bazaar, with orders to prevent the departure of any Europeans on duty there, and on the following day the European garrison was withdrawn, and a company of the 37th native infantry put in their place. "This," says Lieutenant Eyre, "being the weakest point of our defences, had hitherto been protected entirely by parties of her Majesty's 44th, which post of honour they were now considered unworthy to retain."*

* Military Operations, p. 143. The observations made by Lieutenant Eyre in defence of the freedom with which he has reported this and similar facts may be quoted in justification of the adoption of the same course in the present work. "In the course of this narrative I have been compelled, by stern truth, to note down facts nearly affecting the honour and interests of a British regiment. It may, or rather I fear it must, inevitably happen that my unreserved statements of the Kabool occurrences will prove unacceptable to many whose private or public feelings are interested in glossing over or suppressing the numerous errors committed, and censures deservedly incurred, but my heart tells me that no paltry motives of rivalry or malice influence my pen; rather a sincere and honest desire to benefit the public service by pointing out the rocks on which our reputation was wrecked, the means by which our honour was sullied, and our Indian empire endangered, as a warning to future actors in similar scenes. In a word, I believe that more good is likely to ensue from the publication of the whole unmitigated truth, than from a mere garbled statement of it. A kingdom has been lost,—an army slain; and surely if I can shew that had we been but true to ourselves, and had vigorous measures been adopted, the result might have been widely different, I shall have written an instructive lesson to rulers and subjects, to generals and armies, and shall not have incurred in vain the disapprobation of the self-interested

Days passed away, the British in cantonments having continually before them the prospect of starvation; a result averted only by temporary supplies, of the continuance of which no reasonable confidence could be entertained. In homely, but expressive phraseology, they were literally supported "from hand to mouth." The restraints of discipline gradually pressed more and more lightly, till at last they were scarcely felt. With a view to the approaching necessity for retreat, when the magazine would inevitably become a prey to the enemy, the general had ordered some ammunition to be distributed to certain camp-followers, and commanding officers were directed to indent for new arms and accoutrements, in exchange for such as were old or damaged. But little attention was now paid to the letter of orders, and it is stated, that many officers in command of companies rested content with sending their men to the magazine, to help themselves at pleasure; the stores, in the absence of any building proper for their reception, being placed under the trees of an orchard, in charge of a small guard. The consequence was, a scene of confusion and plunder, soldiers and camp-followers indiscriminately

or the proud. It is notorious, that the 44th foot had been for a long time previous to these occurrences in a state of woeful deterioration. I firmly believe that in this, and in every other respect, they stood alone as a regiment of that noble army whose glorious deeds in all quarters of the globe have formed with those of the British navy the foundation of our national pride, and have supplied for ages to come a theme of wonder and admiration."—Pp. 143 to 145.

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rushing to the spot, and each man carrying off what his fancy suggested as desirable for him to possess. Some officers exerted themselves to check the tumult and protect the property, but for some time their authority was openly defied. The semblance of order was ultimately restored, and the larger portion of the misappropriated articles recovered; but the incident afforded a lamentable indication of the relaxation of those ties which withhold a body of soldiery from degenerating into a disorderly mass of armed adventurers.

The negotiations having arrived at a stage when, if they were to be regarded as sincere or binding, effect might be given to the stipulations agreed upon, the British troops in the Bala Hissar marched out to join their brethren in cantonments. But the Affghan chiefs still held back from the execution of the provisions to which they had bound themselves. The British force was entirely at their mercy. The enemy were in possession of all the forts which commanded the cantonments, and the distress, for want of provisions and forage, which prevailed was extreme. Further to aggravate the sufferings of the unhappy force, the winter became intensely cold, and a heavy fall of snow covered the ground.

At this moment, when difficulties, multifarious and seemingly insurmountable, surrounded the British force; with fierce enemies, or pretended, but treacherous, friends without the cantonments, and a perishing mass within; when to remain or to fly seemed alike fraught with destruction; when the

troops had lost all energy, and when no conceivable amount of energy appeared equal to the occasion; when the access of hope on every side seemed barred—a proposal was suddenly made to the British envoy, to which, unhappily, his embarrassments induced him to lend a willing ear. It came from Akbar Khan, and was to this effect: that Ameen-oollah Khan, one of the most influential of the opposing chiefs, and believed to be one of the most hostile, should be seized, and become prisoner; that Mahomed Khan's fort and the Bala Hissar should be reoccupied by the British troops, who were to remain in the country some months longer, and then to evacuate it in a friendly manner; Shah Shoojah to retain the sovereignty, but Akbar Khan to be named his vizier, and, in addition to that office, to receive pecuniary reward to an enormous amount. In one respect the proposal went further than has been stated. To imprison the chief most active in his opposition to Shah Shoojah was, in Affghan eyes, but little, and the envoy was assured that, for a sum of money, the head of his enemy should be laid at his feet. The answer of Sir William Macnaghten was such as became the representative of the government with whose interests he was intrusted; he intimated that it was neither his custom, nor that of his country, to give a price for blood.

Looking at the proposal with the coolness which time and distance and the absence of anxiety allow, it appears too monstrous to pass, even with a novice

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in diplomacy, still less could it be expected to succeed with one so experienced in the ways of men, and so familiar with the wiles of eastern policy, as was Sir William Macnaghten. It came, however, at a moment when almost any change seemed a relief from the harrowing troubles which had pressed so overwhelmingly on his mind, and it should be remembered, also, that, extravagant as were the suggestions offered to him, the history of the East affords multitudinous instances of the severance of apparent friends, and the union of avowed enemies, in no wise more strange and unaccountable than those which were involved in this overture. But, whatever the degree of plausibility which the proposal may bear to different minds, Sir William Macnaghten eagerly, as it seems, embraced it; excepting, however, let it be repeated, that part which involved the infamy and guilt of assassination. His consent having been secured to the outline of the plan, it was suggested that a conference, for the purpose of arranging the details, should take place between him and Akbar Khan. The place selected for the interview was the plain, and thither, about noon on

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the 23rd of September, Sir William Macnaghten proceeded, accompanied by Captains Laurence, Trevor, and Mackenzie. He had requested that the general would have two regiments and two guns ready for secret service, and the existence of a feeling that the experiment he was about to make was attended with danger was indicated by his desiring that the garrison might be kept on the alert, and

the walls strongly manned. It does not appear, however, that much regard was paid to his wishes on this point; for, on leaving the cantonments, he expressed disappointment at the paucity of men on the ramparts and the apparent weakness of the garrison, remarking to his companions, with not less of justice than of bitterness, that it was "of a piece with the military arrangements throughout the siege."

The troops required to carry out the objects of the proposed agreement were not in readiness, and a letter from the general, remonstrating against their being thus employed, was dispatched to the envoy after he had taken his departure, and which consequently he never received. On approaching the place of meeting, the small escort which had accompanied the envoy halted, and he advanced with the three officers to the selected spot, which was partially screened from view from the cantonments by some small hillocks. Akbar Khan soon afterwards appeared, with some other chiefs, among whom was the brother of the man proposed to be seized and imprisoned. A carpet was spread, and the conference began. It had not long continued, when a number of men, heavily armed, gradually drew near, and seemed to be forming a circle round the spot. This was noticed by Captain Laurence, who suggested that, as the conference was of a secret nature, they should be ordered to a distance. Akbar Khan answered, that it was of no importance, for that they were all in the secret. Immediately after-

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wards, he exclaimed, "Seize! seize!" and the envoy and his three companions were immediately pinioned from behind, deprived of their swords, and carried off prisoners. Captain Trevor was speedily put to death, and the same fate befel Sir William Macnaghten, who, it is reported and generally believed, was shot by Akbar Khan with a pistol, one of a pair just before presented by the envoy to the ruthless chief. The bodies of the murdered men were exposed to the indignities and outrages with which eastern revenge is wont to visit the remains of fallen foes, and were paraded through the streets of the city in barbaric triumph. The hand of Sir William Macnaghten was exhibited in savage derision at the window of the place in which the two surviving prisoners were confined.

Much animadversion has been passed on the conduct of Sir William Macnaghten in the business which terminated so fatally for himself. Of imprudence, it is impossible to acquit him. He, indeed, appears to have been aware that on this ground he was without justification. Being warned by one of his companions that the scheme was dangerous, and that treachery might be meditated, he at once admitted the danger, and declared that he had no confidence in the insurgent chiefs, but added—"At any rate, I would rather suffer an hundred deaths than live the last six weeks over again."* The undertaking, then, was the last resource of a man

* Letter from Captain Laurence to Major Pottinger, 10th May, 1842.

who entertained little hope of its success, but saw no means of escape by any other way. Still, if he could not altogether decline the danger, some preparation might have been made for meeting it. The military authorities slumbered in cantonments; but a larger and more efficient escort than that which actually accompanied him ought to have been provided, and the envoy and his immediate attendants should not have been separated from it by so great a distance as that which was permitted to intervene. With a more adequate force, and one prepared to perform its duty,* the lives of the European functionaries might have been sacrificed in the *melée* that must have ensued upon any attempt at resistance, but a chance of escape would have been afforded them.

An excessive display of confidence may, in a few instances, have succeeded in dealing with the people of the East; but where success has followed, there is reason to believe that they have been overawed rather than flattered; and the interests of an empire are of too much importance to be risked

* The troops forming the envoy's small escort characteristically ran away as soon as danger became apparent, with the exception of one man, who was immediately cut down. Some apology for their conduct may be found in the smallness of their number. They were only sixteen, and this number was more than Sir William Macnaghten had proposed to take. But, before he left the cantonments, he seems to have become aware of the error, and the remainder of the body-guard were ordered to follow. They did follow, but had only proceeded a short distance from the gate, when learning the state of affairs, they suddenly faced about and galloped back.

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on an idle display of feeling which can rarely be sincere.

But beyond the charge of imprudence, which is but too well sustained, there seems no ground for impugning the conduct of the British envoy on this occasion. The imputation of bad faith is ridiculous. The chiefs had agreed to certain conditions, not one of which they had ever performed, or, as it would appear, ever intended to perform. All to which the representative of the British government had in return bound himself was consequently at an end, and he was in the same position as that in which he stood before any negotiation commenced. In this state of things he received an overture from one of the chiefs, proposing, on certain conditions, to give up another, whose power of doing mischief was greatly dreaded, and he consented to discuss the proposal.

Whether or not Akbar Khan, had he been sincere, were justified in betraying his coadjutor Ameen-oollah Khan, is not the question. It is no unusual practice to employ the services of one actor in a conspiracy to circumvent the rest; and whatever might be the ties existing between Akbar Khan and the man whom he proposed to seize and make prisoner, Sir William Macnaghten cannot be regarded as at the time under any engagement to either. As a question of morality, no imputation can lie against the character of Sir William Macnaghten for accepting the insidious proposal which was meant to lure him to destruction. As a question of pru-

dence, he cannot escape blame, unless the distracting circumstances in which he was placed may plead his excuse.*

It will naturally be supposed that the events last related were sufficient to rouse the British military authorities from the torpor which had so long oppressed them; that some effort, worthy of the country that gave them birth, the service to which they belonged, and the character which they had to maintain, would have been made to rescue from captivity, if they still lived, the victims of Akbar Khan's treachery, or to inflict just retribution if that treachery had been consummated by assassination. And what was done? Let the question be answered by Lieutenant Eyre, an eye-witness. His testimony is, that the intelligence brought, "instead of rousing our leaders to instant action, seemed to paralyze their faculties; and although it was evident that our envoy had been basely entrapped, if not actually murdered before our very gate, and though

* The quick perception and sound sense of Lady Sale have determined the question in a manner which may satisfy all who are not admirers of native treachery. "We must hold in mind, that although we have performed all promises made on our part, given up our waggons, ammunition, forts, &c., the treaty had never been signed by the chiefs, nor had they fulfilled a single condition which had been specified verbally, beyond giving us grain in small quantities. The *sequitur* is, that the envoy was perfectly justified, as far as keeping good faith went, in entering into any arrangement by which the condition of the troops could be ameliorated, and the honour of our country be ensured. He only erred in supposing it possible that Akbar Khan, proverbially the most treacherous of all his countrymen, could be sincere."—Journal, p. 199.

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even now crowds of Affghans, horse and foot, were seen passing and repassing to and fro in hostile array between Mahomed's fort and the place of meeting, not a gun was opened upon them; not a soldier was stirred from his post; no sortie was apparently even thought of; treachery was allowed to triumph in open day; the murder of a British envoy was perpetrated in the face and within musket-shot of a British army; and not only was no effort made to avenge the dastardly deed, but the body was left lying on the plain, to be mangled and insulted, and finally carried off to be paraded in the public market by a ruffianly mob of fanatical barbarians."* And thus low was British spirit sunk, and thus was British honour tarnished, and thus were a knot of obscure barbarians suffered to revel in successful treachery, and defy the arms of that power before which the choicest troops of Europe had given way!

And now the onward progress of humiliation was rapid and fearful indeed. Insult followed hard upon treachery, in the transmission from the chieftains, upon whose hands the blood of Sir William Macnaghten and Captain Trevor was yet fresh, of a new treaty for the acceptance of those into whose hands the management of the interests of the British government might have passed. It contained the same articles as the previous treaty, with the addition of three others:—1st. That the British force should leave behind all their guns excepting six; 2nd. That they should give up all their treasure;

* Military Operations, pp. 199, 200.

and, 3rd. That the hostages already held by the Affghans should be exchanged for married men, with their wives and families. Some demur arose as to the acceptance of this treaty. Major Eldred Pottinger, who had consented, at the urgent request of the general, to act as political agent, objected, and a council was summoned to consider his objections. It consisted of General Elphinstone, Brigadiers Shelton and Anquetil, Colonel Chambers, Captain Bellew, and Captain Grant. To these officers Major Pottinger opened his views, avowing his conviction that no confidence could be placed in any treaty formed with the Affghans, and that to bind the government of India by engagements to evacuate the country, to restore the deposed ameer, and to pay a sum amounting to fourteen lacs of rupees—for this formed part of the arrangement—was inconsistent with the claims of public duty. Entertaining these opinions, the only honourable course, in his judgment, was either to hold out to the last at Kabool, or to endeavour to force a way to Jelalabad. Major Pottinger appears to have found no support in the council. One and all declared that neither branch of the alternatives suggested was practicable, and that it would be better to pay any sum of money than to prolong hostilities. It was resolved, therefore, to accede to the demands of the enemy; and had they been ten times more unreasonable, and a hundred times more humiliating, probably the same determination would have been adopted. Bills were given for the vast ransom re-

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quired, under the pretence, indeed, of affording protection, but still a difficulty remained. The hostages demanded could not be furnished. A circular was addressed to the married officers, offering considerable personal advantages to those willing to risk the safety of their wives and families by allowing them to be detained, but nearly all refused. A magniloquent answer was therefore given upon this point, to the effect that "it was contrary to the usages of war to give up ladies as hostages, and that the general could not consent to an arrangement which would brand him with perpetual disgrace in his own country."* It was not stated to the chiefs that, unusual and disgraceful as was the surrender required, an attempt to obtain the means of making it had been resorted to and had failed. The enemy were not inexorable—the bills on the government of India had probably softened them—they agreed to receive hostages of the sterner sex; and the requisite number being provided, this ground of difficulty was removed. Captains Drummond, Walsh, Warburton, and Webb, were accepted, and proceeded to join Captains Conolly and Airey, who were already in the keeping of the Affghans. Captains Laurence and Mackenzie, who had been seized with Sir William Macnaghten, were permitted to return, as was also Captain Skinner, who was previously in the power of the enemy.

The sick and wounded of the British force it was arranged should not accompany their companions

* Eyre's Military Operations in Kabool, p. 205.

on the approaching march from Kabool. They were to be left in care of the chiefs, and in furtherance of this design they were conveyed into the Bala Hissar. The movement of the rest was delayed under various pretences till the 6th of January, when, in the language of Lieutenant Eyre, "the fatal morning dawned which was to witness the departure of the Kabool force from the cantonments in which it had sustained a two months' siege, to encounter the miseries of a winter march through a country of perhaps unparalleled difficulty, where every mountain defile, if obstinately defended by a determined enemy, must inevitably prove the grave of hundreds."* The circumstances under which the march commenced are thus described by the same author:—"Dreary indeed was the scene over which with drooping spirits and dismal forebodings we had to bend our unwilling steps. Deep snow covered every inch of mountain and plain with one unspotted sheet of dazzling white, and so intensely bitter was the cold as to penetrate and defy the defences of the warmest clothing."† Sad and suffering issued from the British cantonments the mingled mass of Europeans and Asiatics, of combatants and non-combatants, of men of various climes, creeds, complexion, and habits; part of them peculiarly unfitted to endure the hardships of a rigorous climate, which hardships, however, had to be shared by them in common with some whose sex ordinarily exempts them from participating in

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* Military Operations, p. 214. † Ibid.

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such scenes, and others whose tender age might well entitle them to the like privilege. The number of the fugitive crowd was large; about four thousand five hundred fighting men,* and not less than twelve thousand followers, besides women and children. The advance were in motion at nine o'clock in the morning, and from that hour till the evening the throng continued to pass through the gates of the cantonments, which were immediately occupied by hordes of fanatical Affghans, "rending the air with their exulting cries, and committing every kind of atrocity." A fire of juzails was opened on the retiring troops, and Lieutenant Hardyman, of the 5th light cavalry, with about fifty rank and file, fell victims to it. The cantonments were no sooner cleared than all order was lost; troops, camp-followers, and baggage, public and private, became intermingled in one disorderly mass, and confusion, universal and inextricable, prevailed. Thus was the march commenced. The shadows of night overtook the fugitives while still pursuing their weary course, but its darkness was relieved by the blaze which

* The strength of the force, as far as it could be ascertained, is given by Lieutenant Eyre as follows:—one troop of horse artillery, 90; H.M.'s 44th foot, 600; = 690 Europeans. 5th regiment of light cavalry, two squadrons, 260; 5th Shah's irregular ditto (Anderson's), 500; Skinner's horse, one ressala, 70; 4th irregular ditto, one ditto, 70; mission escort, or body-guard, 70; = 970 cavalry. 5th native infantry, 700; 37th ditto, 600; 54th ditto, 650; 6th Shah's infantry, 600; sappers and miners, 20; Shah's ditto, 240; half the mountain-train, 30; = 2,840. Total, 4,500. Six horse-artillery guns; three mountain-train ditto.

rose above the British residency and other buildings which the enemy had fired upon taking possession of the cantonments. Many sepoys and camp-followers, unable to contend longer with their misery, lay down to wait, in silent despair, the approach of the relief from earthly suffering which death, at no distant period, must bring; and of those who struggled forward, some perished before the morning dawn. The provision for encampment was miserably deficient; here, as on the march, all was disorder and destitution. Thousands of wretched men were unable to obtain either shelter, fire, or food; the snow was their only bed, and to many it proved the bed of death.

The morrow brought no alleviation of suffering; it brought only the agony of consciousness in exchange for the oblivion of slumber. The march was resumed in a different order from that pursued on the preceding day, "if that," says Lieutenant Eyre, "could be called order which consisted of a mingled mob of soldiers, camp-followers, and baggage-cattle, preserving not even the faintest resemblance of that regularity and discipline on which depended our only chance of escape from the danger which threatened us."* One of the Shah's regiments had disappeared, and was believed to have returned to Kabool. The rest of the force proceeded, numerous small bodies of Affghans, horse and foot, hanging on its flanks, and moving in a parallel direction with it. The chiefs, in whose

* Military Operations, p. 220.

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favour bills to the amount of more than fourteen lacs had been drawn, had promised in return an escort, and the parties which thus hovered round the British force were at first supposed to constitute a portion of it. This belief was after a time dispelled by their taking a step which not even by the most liberal construction could be regarded as forming any part of the duties of an escort. They attacked the British rear-guard, under Brigadier Anquetil, composed of her Majesty's 44th, the mountain-train guns, and a squadron of irregular horse. The guns were captured, but gallantly retaken by Lieutenant White and a few artillery-men, who, however, being unsupported, were unable to retain what they had so honourably won back. The 44th could not be brought up, and the guns were in consequence necessarily abandoned, though not until they had been spiked, "amid the gleaming sabres of the enemy."* Ten more guns were afterwards spiked and abandoned, the horses attached to them being unable to drag their burden further through the snow.

It was now learned that Akbar Khan was in the vicinity, and communications were opened with him. That trust-worthy personage declared, that he had been sent to escort the British force to Jelalabad, and that the annoyance which they had suffered was the result of their having marched contrary to the wishes of the Affghan chiefs. He insisted, accordingly, on the force being halted at Boothauk till the

* Lady Sale.

following morning, and moreover demanded six hostages, to insure its not marching beyond Tazeen, till news should be received of the evacuation of Jelalabad by Sir Robert Sale, for which an order had been dispatched, in compliance with a stipulation in the treaty. The required halt was made, but in the morning the Affghans resumed their attacks. A party of them was rapidly dispersed by Major Thain, at the head of her Majesty's 44th, who on this occasion shewed no lack of soldierly spirit.

And now the fearful pass of Boothauk had to be traversed. The defile is about five miles long, and is bounded on both sides by lofty and precipitous hills. A mountain torrent dashes through it with such impetuosity that the frost had produced no effect upon it beyond the edges, where ice was accumulated in slippery masses, affording to the wretched animals which were still retained a footing neither easy nor safe. This stream had to be crossed twenty-eight times. The defile gradually narrows towards the spot where the force was to emerge from it, or such portion at least as might survive the dangerous passage, for the heights were crowned with infuriated Ghiljies, ready to deal death to those below. "The idea," says Lieutenant Eyre, "of threading the stupendous pass before us, in the face of an armed tribe of bloodthirsty barbarians, with such a dense, irregular multitude, was frightful, and the spectacle then presented by that waving sea of animated beings, the majority of whom a few fleeting hours would transform into a line of lifeless carcases, to

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guide the future traveller on his way, can never be forgotten by those who witnessed it."* But the concentrated difficulties and perils were not to be avoided. The advance entered the pass, and a hot fire was commenced on them. Several ladies accompanied the advance, but no feeling of respect for the character or the timidity of woman operated to slacken the fire from above. These helpless and unoffending females were compelled to make their way through the pass with hundreds of shots flying around them. Happily none of them sustained injury, excepting Lady Sale, who received a ball in her arm. Akbar Khan, it will be remembered, had promised protection, and several of his adherents rode forward with the advance, and employed themselves strenuously, whether sincerely or not, in exhorting the occupants of the heights to desist from firing. Their admonitions were unheeded; the balls fell thickly among the throng laboriously struggling onwards, and fearful was the slaughter. To maintain order and regularity under a murderous fire, which those sustaining it have no power to return with effect, may be regarded as one of the highest triumphs of discipline; but the force exposed to this severe trial in the pass of Boothauk had become dreadfully deteriorated in moral as in physical strength; and it will excite no surprise, that among men who for several days had been strangers to both food and repose, and who, for a much longer period, had been gradually losing the

* Military Operations, p. 226.

sense of duty, and with it that of self-respect, panic should arise, and spread with tremendous rapidity. Such was the fact; soldiers and followers rushed on indiscriminately, impelled by the wildness of despair, caring for nothing but the one object of reaching the end of the pass, and perhaps conscious of nothing but of the dangers which beset them. "Thousands," says Lieutenant Eyre, "seeking refuge in flight hurried forward to the front, abandoning baggage, arms, ammunition, women, and children, regardless for the moment of every thing but their own lives."* Some of the details of this most disastrous passage are thus given by the same authority. "The rear-guard, consisting of her Majesty's 44th and the 54th native infantry, suffered severely, and at last, finding that delay was only destruction, they followed the general example, and made the best of their way to the front. Another horse artillery gun was abandoned, and the whole of its artillery-men slain. Captain Anderson's eldest girl and Captain Boyd's youngest boy fell into the hands of the Affghans.† It is supposed that three thousand souls perished in the pass."‡ Such was the price of flight, and what remained to those who survived the carnage? misery even exceeding that which they had previously endured, the task of describing which will best be performed by again quoting the testimony of Lieutenant Eyre. "On the

* Military Operations, pp. 227, 228.

† These children were subsequently recovered.

‡ Military Operations, p. 228.

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force reaching Khoord Kabool, snow began to fall, and continued till morning. Only four small tents were saved, of which one belonged to the general; two were devoted to the ladies and children, and one was given up to the sick; but an immense number of poor wounded wretches wandered about the camp, destitute of shelter, and perished during the night. Groans of misery and distress assailed the ear from all quarters. We had ascended to a still colder climate than we had left behind, and were without tents, fuel, or food."* To this miserable night succeeded a morning bringing with it the confusion, uncertainty, and woe which had marked so many by which it had been preceded. Two hours before the time fixed upon for marching, a large portion of the troops, and nearly all the camp-followers, moved off without orders. They were recalled, in consequence of communications from Akbar Khan promising supplies, and, at the same time, strongly urging a halt till he could make some arrangements for carrying into effect his benevolent desire of escorting his British friends in safety. This halt, like almost every other measure which had been taken since the outbreak in Kabool, seems to have been most injudicious. "There can be no doubt," says the author to whose brief but valuable narrative reference has so frequently been made,† "that the general feeling in camp was adverse to a halt, there being scarcely even a native soldier who did not plainly perceive that our only chance of escape

* Military Operations, p. 229. † Lieutenant Eyre.

consisted in moving on as fast as possible. This additional delay, therefore, and prolongation of their sufferings in the snow, of which one more march would have carried them clear, made a very unfavourable impression on the minds of the native soldiers, who now, for the first time, began very generally to entertain the idea of deserting."*

The halt, however, if it answered no other purpose, afforded opportunity for further communications with Akbar Khan, and one of a most extraordinary nature was received from him. It was to the effect, that the ladies who accompanied the British force, with their husbands and children, should, in order to preserve them from further hardship and danger, be placed under his protection, he pledging himself to escort them safely, keeping them one day's march in the rear of the army. This was a startling proposal, but time and circumstances pressed, and the general gave an unhesitating consent. There could be little doubt that the object of Akbar Khan was to get possession of the married men and their families as hostages, a point previously attempted to be carried, but defeated by the refusal of the officers interested. It does not appear that any resistance was now offered on their part, and, indeed, the dangers which surrounded those most dear to them were so imminent, and the sufferings to which they were unavoidably subjected so great, as to warrant, in some degree, the belief that no change could be for the worse. The general had

* Military Operations, pp. 230, 231.

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not objected to the former demand of the enemy, till compelled by the determination of his officers; it need, therefore, excite no surprise that he should yield now, when the motives for yielding were so much more urgent, nor can his reasons be an object of much curiosity. As, however, he left them on record, it is right to give them as stated by himself. They were two; a desire, natural and laudable, to remove the ladies and children, after the horrors they had already witnessed, from the further dangers of a camp; and a hope that, "as from the very commencement of the negotiations the Sirdar had shewn the greatest anxiety to have the married people as hostages, this mark of trust might elicit a corresponding feeling in him"! Here is the fatal error by which European safety in India has been so often perilled, and sometimes wrecked. What confidence could be placed in a ruthless ruffian, whose every breath was tainted by treachery? whose hand had just before struck down the British envoy in death, while professions of friendship were yet warm on his lips, and the value of whose promises was too well understood to be regarded as any thing more than a mockery of the ear—for hope had ceased to wait upon them, and they could be listened to but as idle words, meant, indeed, to deceive, but no longer possessed of the power of deceiving? Or, again, what confidence was likely to be felt by Akbar Khan in those whom he must know affected to trust him only because they were without remedy, and he, too, a man so utterly faithless as to be incapable of

conceiving the possibility of good faith in others; a man pre-eminent for perfidy in a country where perfidy is universal? The expectation of inspiring Akbar Khan with confidence by making a show of that feeling towards him was just as rational as would be the hope of a traveller who encounters a tiger in the jungle to disarm the hostility of the animal and change its natural character by calmly awaiting its spring instead of avoiding it. Confidence and magnanimity have reigned long enough, and it is time that prudence and common sense should be admitted to offer counsel without the certainty of its rejection. To negotiate at all with the murderer of Sir William Macnaghten was discreditable—it would not be too much to say disgraceful. To talk of reposing confidence in him indicated either utter fatuity or miserable affectation. To place women in the situation in which were placed the wives of the British officers of the Kabool force was a fearful thing. To surrender them to the power of a barbarian, alike destitute of honour and insensible to the claims of pity, was a step attended with such overwhelming responsibility that few men, it may be believed, would venture to incur it, even to avert the certain death of those who were objects of the transfer. Whether, however, it were right or wrong, with reference to all circumstances, to accept the proposal of Akbar Khan, is a question on which some difference of opinion may possibly exist; but it is beyond dispute that, of the two reasons assigned for accepting it, one is utterly worth-

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less, and ought not for a moment to have had the slightest weight in guiding the judgment to a decision on the awful occasion.

Orders were given for all married officers and ladies to depart immediately, with a body of Affghan horse, who had been dispatched to conduct them to the asylum in which they were to find refuge. It was the intention of the general to give all the wounded officers the opportunity of availing themselves of the advantages, such as they might be, of Akbar Khan's protection. As this desire could have been suggested by no other feeling than humanity, it is proper to notice it, as corroborating the received impression of the character of General Elphinstone, who, whatever may have been his failings in the unhappy proceedings at Kabool, is universally represented as an amiable and estimable man. Few were benefited by the kind intentions of the general, for the Affghan guard were in such haste to return with the charge which they had been appointed to receive, that only two of the wounded officers were in time to join them.

The women who had shared in the dangers and horrors of the march to Boothauk were now in the hands of the enemy; for though Akbar Khan profest a different character, that of an enemy is the only one in which he can be justly regarded. The men had to struggle on—the food and fuel so liberally promised by the ruffian chief came not. "Another night of starvation and cold consigned

more victims to a miserable death."* Another morning revealed the same weakness—the same suffering—the same disruption of military ties which had marked preceding ones, but in an aggravated degree. The men who had proudly marched from the Indus to the heart of Affghanistan, had occupied its fairest cities, beaten down its strongest fortresses, and given law from its capital, were now unable to defend themselves from those who thirsted for their blood. It was not alone that death and desertion had frightfully thinned their ranks—a large portion of those who survived and remained faithful to the standard which they followed were incapable of performing the duties of soldiers—their limbs scarcely retained sufficient strength to bear them along their despairing way; and that elasticity of spirit which sometimes sustains the sinking frame against the attacks of physical suffering was unknown. Such is the representation of Lieutenant Eyre. "The European soldiers were now almost the only efficient men left, the Hindostanees having all suffered more or less from the effects of the frost in their hands and feet; few were able even to hold a musket, much less to pull a trigger; in fact, the prolonged delay in the snow had paralyzed the mental and bodily powers of the strongest men, rendering them incapable of any useful exertion. Hope seemed to have died in every breast; the wildness of terror was exhibited in every countenance."†

* Eyre's Military Operations, p. 236. † Ibid.

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The end was now rapidly approaching. At a narrow gorge, lying between the precipitous spurs of two hills, the advance of the retreating force was met by the destructive fire of the enemy, securely perched on the high ground. The straitened pass soon became literally choked with dead and dying; and here the last remains of the native infantry disappeared. Many fell; the rest, throwing away their arms and accoutrements, fled for life. Finally, the enemy rushed down sword in hand, and captured the public treasure, with the remnant of baggage, which, up to this point, had been preserved. A part of the advance succeeded in getting through; this halted, to enable the main and rear columns to come up with them. A straggler from time to time arrived, bearing heavy news; another and another appeared, and in this manner all that escaped the fury of the enemy joined; the direful truth that, with these miserable exceptions, the two missing columns had been cut off and destroyed at length becoming apparent beyond the possibility of question. The British force now consisted of seventy men of the Queen's 44th regiment, a hundred and fifty cavalry troopers, about fifty horse artillery-men, with one twelve-pound howitzer. Such was its strength as to combatants, but the number of camp-followers was still large.

Akbar Khan approached, and proposed that the remainder of the British force should be disarmed, and placed under his protection. The general refused, and the march was resumed. Its

course lay through a narrow defile, in which the troops were exposed to the harassing and destructive fire of the enemy as before. The energy of Brigadier Shelton saved the force from total destruction here, and it reached the Tazeen valley, where negotiations were again renewed with Akbar Khan. The same proposal was again made by him, and again it was rejected by the British general. After this failure, it was determined to push on for Jugdulluk, distant twenty-two miles. On moving off, the last gun was abandoned; the same fate befel the exhausted and wounded. The march commenced at seven o'clock, and it was hoped that Jugdulluk might be reached under cover of the night, but this was not accomplished. It was not till dawn of day that the advance arrived at Kutter-Sung, a place ten miles short of that which was in view; and the junction of the rear did not take place till eight o'clock. The march had not been without annoyance from the enemy, but the darkness depriving them of the opportunity of calling into operation their skill as marksmen, their fire was comparatively harmless, excepting as to the alarm which it excited. In this way it greatly embarrassed the movement of the retreating force; "the panic-stricken camp-followers now resembled a herd of deer, and fluctuated backwards and forwards *en masse* at every shot, blocking up the entire road, and fatally retarding the progress of the little body of soldiers who, under Brigadier Shelton, brought up the rear." Of the exertions of this officer

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throughout the last and fatal stage of the proceedings of the Kabool force, all narrators speak in terms of the highest praise and admiration. If he had failed in some of the higher and more delicate duties of command, he well supported that reputation for daring courage and indomitable perseverance which has never been denied him. Jugdulluk was reached in the afternoon, but no repose awaited the hapless fugitives. A fresh invitation to communicate with Akbar Khan was answered by the despatch of Captain Skinner, but the renewal of negotiations was accompanied by no cessation of hostile operations. From the hills the fire of the enemy was kept up, excepting during a brief interval, when Captain Bygrove, at the head of fifteen Europeans, pushed up, the enemy flying before them in the greatest trepidation. But short was the period of relief, for the valiant band had no sooner returned than the enemy were again at their post, in the exercise of their occupation of slaughter. The result of Captain Skinner's interview with Akbar Khan was a message from that chief to the general, requesting his presence at a conference, and demanding Brigadier Shelton and Captain Johnson as hostages for the evacuation of Jelalabad. Among the strange occurrences of the period, it is not the least strange that this invitation was accepted. General Elphinstone made over the command to Brigadier Anquetil, and, accompanied by the officers whom Akbar Khan had selected for captivity, proceeded to wait upon

that personage. They were received with great show of civility—food was placed before them, and this substantial indication of friendship was accompanied in profusion by the lighter and more aerial refreshment of gracious promises. In the morning a conference was held, at which the three British officers and all the influential chiefs were present. It seems to have been stormy, and Akbar Khan played the part of a mediator with a degree of skill and dexterity only to be displayed by one who, from the earliest dawn of reason, had entered into an apprenticeship of hypocrisy. Nothing decisive was determined upon, and the day beginning to wane, General Elphinstone became anxious to return. But this was not a matter which depended on himself: he was in the toils, and, though he might struggle, he could but beat the air. The expression of his wish to withdraw, and of his desire to be furnished with the requisite escort, after sundry repetitions, was enforced by representing that it was altogether at variance with British notions of honour that a general should be separated from his troops in the hour of danger; but Akbar Khan was no child of chivalry, and the appeal was vain.

At the British position, the return of the general had been long and anxiously looked for—it were, perhaps, too much to say expected. Early in the morning, Major Thain and Captain Skinner had rode out in the direction of the camp of Akbar Khan, to watch for the approach of some mes-

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senger with tidings of the state of affairs, when they were attacked, and Captain Skinner mortally wounded. Throughout the day hunger, thirst, exhaustion, and the galling annoyance of the enemy's unceasing fire, continued to be endured; and as night drew on, it became obvious that nothing was to be hoped from a longer stay. The whole body accordingly sallied forth, to make their way to Jelalabad, in the best manner that they could. The Ghiljies were not at first aware of the movement, but they soon gained intelligence of it, and marched in vast numbers to their work of destruction. Officers and men, troops and followers, fell in incredible numbers, and the progress of the retiring party was a moving massacre. Some officers, who were well mounted, rode forward with the few remaining cavalry; straggling parties of Europeans, under various officers, followed, as circumstances would permit. The day dawned; the remnant of the infantry approached Gundamuck, and now their numerical weakness was obvious to the enemy—they could muster only about twenty muskets. An attempt to negotiate was made by one of the officers, but it ended in nothing, and the unhappy party had no resource but to stand on their defence without a hope of ultimate success. This gloomy task they executed with an unshrinking determination. They occupied an eminence opposite to another held by the enemy; the fire of the latter gradually diminished their numbers, and at intervals the work of extermination was accelerated by a

rush, sword in hand, upon the devoted party, by whom, notwithstanding the utter hopelessness of their situation, the assailants were several times repelled. The struggle lasted till nearly every man of the British party was wounded, when a final onset of the enemy completed their destruction. Captain Souter, one of the few that survived the slaughter, but severely wounded, had, before leaving Jugdulluk, tied round his waist the colours of the regiment, which were thus preserved.

It has been stated that twelve officers and some cavalry rode on ahead of the rest of the troops, and it remains to record their fate. Six of them dropped before reaching Futteeabad. The rest arrived at that place in safety, and were received by the inhabitants with professions of friendship and sympathy. Food was offered them, of which they naturally, but unwisely, stopped to partake. The inhabitants in the meantime armed themselves, and suddenly rushing on the men whom they had ensnared, cut down two of them. The remainder mounted and rode off. The enemy, however, pursued, and all the fugitives perished before reaching Jelalabad, with the exception of one, Dr. Bryden, who arrived there but to report the destruction of all his companions. Such was the fate that befel the remnant of the Kabool force.

And now it is time to turn to the spot where the solitary man, bearing the baleful tidings of its annihilation, arrived, and where he found a refuge. Jelalabad was still held by the English under Sir

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Robert Sale. He had been required, under the conditions of the treaty concluded by the British authorities at Kabool with the Affghan chiefs, to evacuate the place and march for India. The answer was, that Akbar Khan was known to be inciting the chiefs in the neighbourhood to raise their followers, for the purpose of intercepting and destroying the force now at Jelalabad; and that, under these circumstances, it was deemed proper to await further orders, which, it was requested, might point out the nature of the security to be given for the safe march of the garrison to Peshawur. Sir Robert Sale had no superfluity of provisions, and was obliged to place the men under his command on half rations; he was greatly in want of ammunition, and as to treasure, was almost literally without a rupee; his force was barely sufficient to perform, with very great exertion, the duties required of it; his chance of obtaining relief or reinforcements seemed extremely slender, and he had reason to expect, that after they had disposed of the Kabool force the Affghans would concentrate their power in an attack upon Jelalabad. But he had a spirit which saved him from yielding, amid all these discouragements, and he resolved not wantonly to throw away the lives of those under his charge, nor to place in jeopardy the honour of his country and the *prestige* of its name.

It is not to be supposed that in India his situation was regarded with indifference, but the difficulties in the way of affording succour were great, and

the first effort made for the purpose ended in failure. Immediately on the government becoming advised of the commencement of the disturbances at Kabool, a brigade, consisting of four regiments of native infantry, had been assembled in Peshawur, under Colonel Wyld. That officer, with his brigade strengthened (numerically at least) by some Sikh battalions and the artillery attached to them, prepared to march through the Khyber pass; but the Sikhs shrunk from the duty at the moment when it was about to be commenced; camel-drivers and others deserted in vast numbers, a series of disastrous accidents involving the loss of much baggage and treasure occurred, and the brigadier was compelled to retreat. The fort of Ali Musjid, after an ineffectual attempt to relieve it, was at this time abandoned to the wild tribes inhabiting the vicinity of the pass.

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This misfortune occurred in January. Early in that month a reinforcement, consisting of her Majesty's 9th foot and 10th light cavalry, a regiment of native infantry, and a detachment from another, together with details of artillery and irregular cavalry, crossed the Sutledge on its way to Peshawur. Subsequently, the force assembled there was strengthened by the despatch of her Majesty's 3rd dragoons and 31st foot, the 1st light cavalry, two regiments of native infantry, some recruits for her Majesty's 13th, and some details of irregular cavalry and artillery. The command of the entire force was destined for Major-General Lumly, but the state of

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his health preventing his undertaking the duty, it was transferred to Major-General Pollock. Such were the arrangements made by the government of Lord Auckland, the period of whose retirement from his high office was approaching. He was about to quit India under circumstances widely different from those which a few months before had been contemplated. The policy which had been carried out at great expense had been frustrated, and of the army which had marched to the invasion of Affghanistan, a large part had been destroyed, while the portions that had escaped this fate were shut up in isolated positions, where it was difficult to convey assistance.

At Kandahar the course of events had been more prosperous than at Kabool. When the insurrection broke out at the latter place, the same apparent calm which had there preceded it and the same feeling of security prevailed at Kandahar. A brigade, under Colonel Maclaren, had actually commenced its return march for India, and its progress was interrupted only by the receipt of intelligence of the disaster which had befallen Captain Woodburn.* On the arrival of a demand for assistance from Kabool, this brigade was ordered to march thither, but, after sustaining dreadful hardships, was compelled by the severity of the weather to return without effecting its object. Akbar Khan, when he had cleared his hands of business at Kabool, approached Kandahar, which was crowded with chiefs

* See page 270.

from whom danger might reasonably be expected; and it became a question how to avert from that place mischief similar to that which occurred at Kabool. Money seems to have been considered to be the most efficient instrument for the purpose, and a lac of rupees was disbursed to the chiefs, to induce them to resist the enemy. The money was readily taken, and when no more was procurable, the chiefs joined Akbar Khan, the same step being taken by a son of Shah Shoojah's, named Suftur Jung. The enemy gradually approached Kandahar: on a large body taking up a position within a short distance of that place, General Nott determined to attack them, and on the 12th January A. D. 1842. moved out for the purpose, with nearly all his disposable force. The enemy were strongly posted with a morass in front, and the fire of their matchlockmen was, for a time, well kept up; but they broke and fled, on the close approach of the British force, so rapidly, indeed, as to escape severe loss. The attack, however, and the success which attended it, led to very beneficial results: it gave confidence to one party, and tended to dispirit the other.

A pause in the active course of events affords a convenient opportunity for withdrawing attention for a space from the affairs of Affghanistan, suspension being further expedient from the change which took place in the office of governor-general. The position of General Nott at Kandahar, of Sir Robert Sale at Jelalabad, and of the force under General Pollock in Peshawur, will be borne in mind. It is

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only necessary to add, with respect to the state of affairs on the western side of British India, that the son of the former khan of Kelat had been recognized by the government, that in Sinde and Belochistan all was quiet, and that a force stationed in those countries was prepared to advance under Brigadier England to co-operate with General Nott in any manner that might seem expedient. A very brief notice of certain events cotemporary with the progress of the Affghan war, but unconnected with it, will be required, in order to complete the history of the Earl of Auckland's administration.

Of these, the first to be mentioned is the occupation of Kurnool by a British force. This territory, lying in Northern India, was held by a native chieftain, whose conduct, both as regarding his neighbours and his own subjects, was so extraordinary as to call imperiously for interference. No difficulty was experienced in obtaining possession of the capital, but the nawab, with some hundred of his followers, withdrew from the place; or rather, the former was carried away by the latter, and detained as a sort of hostage for the satisfaction of arrears of pay. Lieutenant-Colonel Dyce, 34th Madras light infantry, marched with a force against them, and, after a sharp encounter, succeeded in securing the person of the nawab, as well as several other prisoners, and much property. An immense quantity of warlike stores was found at Kurnool, the greater part being concealed in and about the Zenana, and other places little likely to be chosen as receptacles

for such articles. The conduct of the nawab was indeed altogether so unaccountable, that his sanity might reasonably be questioned. But, whatever the causes which led to his extraordinary acts, he was properly removed from the government of a people whom he oppressed beyond even the ordinary measure of Oriental despotism, and his territory was annexed to the British dominions.*

Bundlecund, always distracted, afforded another call for British intervention. It became necessary to move a force against a fortified place called Cherong. The force, which was partly regular and partly irregular, was under the command of Captain W. F. Beatson. The garrison was reputed to be four thousand strong; but, after two days' cannonading, and a severe conflict under the walls, they withdrew, leaving the place to be occupied by the British.

On the 28th of February, Lord Ellenborough, who had been appointed to succeed the Earl of Auckland in the government of India, arrived at Calcutta, and on the 12th of March following the latter nobleman took his departure. For obvious reasons, no attempt can be made towards a general estimate of the character of the Earl of Auckland, A. D. 18

* The nawab was provided with a residence at Trichinopoly, where he evinced much interest in regard to the doctrines of Christianity, and, either from curiosity or some higher motive, he several times attended the service of the missionaries' church at that place. On the last occasion of his thus attending, he was mortally stabbed by a fanatical Mahometan, and died a few hours after receiving the wound.

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in the manner pursued with regard to some of his predecessors. The judgment of the reader must be determined altogether by the facts recorded. The great event of his lordship's administration was the invasion of Affghanistan, and to what extent he is responsible for this is uncertain. The impression which he left in India appears to have been highly favourable, and the candid among those who dissent from his policy will unhesitatingly concede to him the possession of many qualities calculated to command respect, and many to conciliate regard. Though the larger portion of the period of his administration was passed amid the turmoil of war, he found opportunity to turn his thoughts to questions connected with the internal improvement of the country which he governed: and had his lot been cast in calmer times, it cannot be doubted that such questions would have occupied much more of his attention, and have been pursued to results of practical utility.

CHAPTER XXXI.

LORD ELLENBOROUGH arrived in India in the midst of a disastrous war, and the first event of importance occurring after his arrival partook of the character of too many which had preceded it. The fort and citadel of Ghuznee, so gallantly won by the British arms, returned into the hands of the enemy. The town had been lost at an earlier period. It appears that when the affairs of Shah Shoojah and his ally began to go wrong, Colonel Palmer, the officer commanding at Ghuznee, applied to the British authorities at Kabool for sanction to certain necessary repairs and alterations there, but failed to obtain it. "The infatuation that appears to have seized the chief authorities there," says an officer present at the time in Ghuznee,* "not only hurried them on to ruin at the capital, but also paralyzed us at Ghuznee." It is, however, to be remembered, as some extenuation of the apparent neglect, that there was quite enough to be done and thought of at Kabool

* Lieutenant Crawford, 3rd Bombay native infantry, narrative published in appendix to Lieutenant Eyre's "Military Operations in Kabool."

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to occupy all the energy and all the reflections of those who held command there. They have enough to answer for in connection with the more immediate sphere of their duty, and may claim to be visited lightly for a seeming forgetfulness of the dangers of distant places. "At the eleventh hour," continues the writer above quoted, "the colonel took the responsibility on himself;" and it is certainly to be lamented that he did not assume it at an earlier period, for, it is added, "most invaluable time had been suffered to pass unimproved, and when the enemy made their appearance under our walls, they found us but ill prepared for a siege, especially when it was not man alone we had to combat with, but the rigours of a winter as intense as that of Canada." The inhabitants of the town were believed to be faithful to the British cause. It turned out that this, like many similar convictions, was a delusion. They intrigued with their countrymen outside, and finally provided means for their admittance, when they poured in, in such vast numbers, that the garrison, after fighting for a night and a day, were compelled to abandon the town and retire to the citadel. This was maintained until
A. D. 1842. the 1st of March, more than ten weeks after the loss of the town. During this interval the duty was most oppressive, and the weather frightfully severe. Snow would often fall in the course of a single night to the depth of two feet, and the thermometer was sometimes fourteen degrees below zero. Every officer and man in the place was on duty during eight hours

of the twenty-four; provisions were scarce, fuel still more scarce. The sepoys, compelled to undergo such severity of duty in a climate to which they were unaccustomed, and whose rigours they were unfitted to sustain, rapidly became diseased, and the hospital was soon crowded. The supply of water at last failed, a result accelerated by an occurrence which might otherwise be regarded as of favourable aspect—the disappearance of the snow, on which the garrison mainly depended. This continuation of suffering enforced the surrender of the place, a step which Colonel Palmer had been authorized, and indeed required, to take by the authorities at Kabool, in pursuance of the arrangements into which they had entered with the Affghan chiefs, but which he had avoided as long as practicable. The evacuation was to be effected on terms according to which the garrison were to march out of the citadel within six days, when a portion of the city was to be assigned for their abode till they could pursue their march from the place, which was to be performed with their colours, baggage, and a sufficient stock of ammunition, and under an escort for protection. To observe the terms of agreement the chiefs solemnly bound themselves by an oath upon the Koran; and on the 6th of March the British troops quitted the citadel, and took up their quarters in the town. The value of an Affghan oath was soon ascertained. On the day after the evacuation of the citadel by the British, they were treacherously attacked by the enemy, and during three days had

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to defend themselves in the best manner they were able against the guns of the citadel, so lately at their own disposal, and the furious onsets of countless numbers of fanatics thirsting for their blood. Overtures for a termination of hostilities came at intervals from the commander, Shumsoodeen Khan, nephew of Dost Mahomed, but the horrible conditions tendered for the acceptance of Colonel Palmer were, that all the officers should surrender themselves to the personal care of Shumsoodeen, abandoning the sepoys to the fury of the murderous hordes who surrounded them. This of course was refused, and the slaughter proceeded; officers and men alike falling victims to it. Certain death, sooner or later, seemed to await every individual of the garrison, and this was the impression of the sepoys, who at length, without the knowledge of their officers, held a consultation among themselves, and framed a plan of escaping to Peshawur through a hole in the outer wall of the town, which they forthwith commenced digging. When their determination had been taken, they informed their officers of it, expressing a desire that they would go with them, but intimating that, however this might be, the men would go. Thus virtually deserted, the officers had no choice but to surrender themselves to Shumsoodeen.

The attempt of the sepoys to escape proved a miserable failure. A heavy snow fell, in which they became bewildered as to the route to be pursued, and they were all either cut to pieces or made

prisoners. Had they got clear of the Affghans occupying and surrounding the city, they would have had but little chance of safety. They appear to have utterly mistaken the distance to Peshawur, believing it to be much less than it actually was, and no reasoning could satisfy them of their error, or of the utter impracticability of their reaching the place. The officers fared little better than the sepoys; their lives were preserved, but they were subjected to almost every description of suffering that can add to the necessary and unavoidable evils of imprisonment.

Greatly was the fall of Ghuznee to be lamented, and much its probable effects on the enemy, as well as on the British troops, to be feared. But Jelalabad still happily held out, under the command of Sir Robert Sale. The difficulties with which this most able and most heroic officer had to contend have been already adverted to, but now, when the narrative has advanced to the period when a crisis in the affairs of Jelalabad was impending, it may be proper to notice them somewhat more in detail. He found the walls in a state which, in his own language, "might have justified despair as to the possibility of defending them." Not only was the space inclosed by the walls far too extensive with reference to his force, but their tracing was bad; there was no parapet except for a few hundred yards, and this not more than two feet high. Earth and rubbish had accumulated about the ramparts to such an extent that there were roads in

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various directions across and over them into the country. There was a space of four hundred yards together at no point of which, excepting one, the garrison could shew themselves; the population within was disaffected, and without the place was surrounded by ruined forts, walls, mosques, tombs, and gardens, from which a fire could be opened on the defenders at twenty or thirty yards distance.* It has already been mentioned that the garrison were greatly in want of provisions and ammunition; every possible exertion was made to reduce the consumption of both to the point of necessity, and to procure fresh supplies, while the apparently hopeless task of placing the town in a respectable state of defence was carried on with a vigour and success which seemed to recognize difficulties only to defy and overcome them. The successful sallies by which Sir Robert Sale cleared the vicinity of vast bodies of the enemy have been narrated in their proper place. When the first disastrous news from Kabool reached him, he hoped that Jelalabad might afford a place of refuge to the retreating army from the former place. That hope was met by a miserable disappointment in the intelligence that the Kabool force had been totally destroyed in the Ghiljie defiles. While thus deprived of the opportunity of affording succour to others, Sir Robert Sale was disappointed of that which he

* The substance of this account of the state of the place is taken from Sir Robert Sale's letter to the Government of India, 16th of April, 1842, and the greater part of it in his own words.

expected for himself by the check which the force under Brigadier Wyld received. His position was now most critical, and one of the grounds upon which it had been maintained had ceased to exist. But he determined to persevere. "I might," he says, "whilst our enemies were engaged in plundering the force from Kabool, have attempted and perhaps effected, though with heavy loss, a retreat across Khyber, but I resolved, at all hazards, on not relinquishing my grasp on the chief town of the valley of Ningrahar, and the key of Eastern Affghanistan, so long as I had reason to consider that our government desired to retain it."* The restoration, or rather the reconstruction of the works was now completed. The labour had been great, extending to the removal of a vast quantity of cover for the enemy, the demolition of forts and old walls, the filling up ravines, the cutting down of trees, and sweeping away of gardens. Such were the operations of the destructive kind. In the constructive they had embraced the raising the parapets to the height of six or seven feet, repairing and widening the ramparts, extending the bastions, retrenching three of the gates, covering the fourth with an outwork, and excavating a ditch ten feet in depth and twelve in width round the whole of the walls, "The place," observes Sir Robert Sale, "was thus secure against the attack of any Asiatic enemy not

* Letter from Sir Robert Sale to the Government of India, 16th of April, 1842.

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provided with siege artillery."* The greater part of their defences, however, were overthrown by one of those awful visitations not unusual in Affghanistan, the effects of which are thus described by Sir

A. D. 1842. Robert Sale:—"It pleased Providence on the 19th of February to remove in an instant this ground of confidence. A tremendous earthquake shook down all our parapets, built up with so much labour, injured several of our bastions, cast to the ground all our guard-houses, demolished a third of the town, made a considerable breach in the rampart of a curtain in the Peshawur face, and reduced the Kabool gate to a shapeless mass of ruins."† "Thus," observes the garrison engineer,‡ "in one moment the labours of three months were in a great measure destroyed." Dispiriting as was this fearful overthrow of the product of so much time and labour, it did not paralyze the energies of either officers or men. No time was lost in lamentation or despairing bewilderment; "the shocks had scarcely ceased when the whole garrison was told off into working parties; and before night the breaches were scarped, the rubbish below cleared away, and the ditches before them dug out, while the great one on the Peshawur side was surrounded by a good gabion parapet."§ It is not easy to give an ade-

* Letter from Sir Robert Sale to the Government of India, 16th of April, 1842.

† Ibid.

‡ Captain Broadfoot, note on works, dated 16th of April, 1842.

§ Note by Captain Broadfoot.

quate impression of the labour performed, or of the noble spirit which prevailed among those who laboured, without quoting at an inconvenient length from official reports. One extract respecting the general result must suffice. "From the following day* all the troops off duty were continually at work, and such were their energy and perseverance that, by the end of the month, the parapets were entirely restored, the Kabool gate again serviceable, the bastions either restored or the curtain filled in when restoration was practicable, and every battery re-established."† So extraordinary did this appear to Akbar Khan, who had now advanced to a spot about seven miles distant from the place, that he could find only one solution of the difficulty, and unhesitatingly attributed the unlooked for security of Jelalabad to English witchcraft. The enemy soon approached nearer,—Akbar Khan establishing his head-quarters about two miles from the city, and a secondary camp about a mile distant,—invested the place, and kept up a vigorous blockade. Various skirmishes from time to time took place, and the spirit, gallantry, and military skill displayed in them would justify a minute detail of the circumstances of each, did space permit. They must, however, be passed by with this general notice, saving the mention of some of the officers who respectively led the detachments engaged, and who well merited the approbation which they received from the illustrious officer under whom

* February 20th. † Note by Captain Broadfoot.

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they served: they were, Colonel Dennie, a name long associated with noble deeds; Captain Broadfoot, garrison engineer, who was severely wounded; Captain Fenwick, of the Queen's 13th light infantry; Captain Pattison, of the same regiment; Captain Oldfield and Lieutenant Mayne, of Shah Shoojah's cavalry. These successes, as Sir Robert Sale observed, were "crowned by Providence by the issue of the decisive and brilliant attack on the camp of the Sirdar, on the 7th of April." Of this attack it will be proper to take somewhat more extended notice. Three columns of infantry were formed, the centre consisting of the larger part of her Majesty's 13th, mustering five hundred bayonets, under Lieutenant-Colonel Dennie; the left, of the chief part of the 35th native infantry, also five hundred strong, under Lieutenant-Colonel Monteath; and the right, of one company of her Majesty's 13th, and one company of the 35th native infantry, with a detachment of sappers, the whole amounting to three hundred and sixty, and under the command of Captain Havelock. The columns were to be supported by the fire of the guns, and by the small cavalry force at Jelalabad. The troops issued from the Kabool and Peshawur gates early in the morning, and found the whole force of the enemy, amounting to about six thousand, formed in order of battle, for the defence of their camp, their right resting on a fort, their left on the Kabool river. Some ruined works, recently repaired, were filled with Affghan marksmen, ready to pour forth a fatally directed fire. The attack

was led by the skirmishers and column under Captain Havelock, by whom the extreme left of the enemy's advanced line was pierced. The central column directed its efforts against a square fort upon the same base, which was obstinately defended. And here a calamity occurred for which victory scarcely affords compensation; Colonel Dennie, while leading his regiment to the assault, was mortally wounded, and shortly afterwards breathed his last.* The command of the column thus devolved upon Captain Wilkinson, of the same regiment, and the conflict proceeded. The rear of the work having been with some difficulty gained, orders were given for a combined attack upon the enemy's camp. The Affghans made repeated attempts to check the advance by a sharp fire of musketry, by throwing forward heavy bodies of horse, which twice threatened in force the detachments of foot under Captain Havelock, and by opening guns under cover of a garden wall, served, as it was said, under the personal

* The fall of this gallant officer, so strangely slighted in the distribution of honours and rewards, excited universal regret. One well-deserved mark of honour, which could not have been refused him, came too late to gratify his noble spirit. Medals were bestowed on the officers who distinguished themselves in Affghanistan, and that of Colonel Dennie, with a feeling of delicate attention, was forwarded to his mother, a lady far advanced in years, but whom age had not rendered insensible to the value of the memorial, nor unfitted for gracefully acknowledging it. She received the medal, she said, with pleasure and with pride; she felt that she had a right to be proud of her son's life—and also of his death; a declaration not less worthy of a Roman than of an English matron.

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superintendence of the Sirdar, but in vain. The artillery advanced at a gallop, and directed a heavy fire on the enemy's centre, whilst two of the columns of infantry penetrated his line near the same point, and the third forced back his left from its support on the river, driving into it some both of horse and foot. In a very short time the foe was dislodged from every part of his position, his guns captured, his camp involved in flames, and Akbar Khan, with his discomfited army, in full retreat towards Lughman. This defeat in open field by the troops whom he had boasted of blockading was indeed, as stated by Sir Robert Sale, "complete and signal." On the 16th of April, nine days after this memorable affair, the force under General Pollock reached Jelalabad.

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General Pollock, on arriving in the camp at Peshawur, had found the four infantry regiments there dispirited by their recent failure;* in truth, a very bad spirit prevailed among them, and, further, the ravages of an epidemic disease had thrown hundreds of men into hospital. Under such circumstances, it was obviously imprudent to attempt to advance, and the junction of her Majesty's 9th foot did not, in the general's opinion, change the state of things so materially as to warrant his taking such a step. Reinforcements were in the rear,† and it was deemed advisable to wait their arrival. It was contrived, however, to open communications with Sir Robert Sale, warning him of the approach of

* See p. 321. † See notice of the extent, p. 321.

relief, and representing the expediency of waiting for the junction of the whole force destined for the purpose, but intimating, that in case of extreme emergency, an attempt to advance would be made at all hazards. Ultimately, it was resolved not to wait for the infantry regiment, but to move forward as soon as the cavalry and guns arrived; but further delay became necessary, in order to complete arrangements with the Seiks who were to co-operate in forcing the passes. Attempts had been made to purchase the aid of some native chiefs, and some money had been paid, but it seems to little purpose. On the 5th of April, General Pollock found himself A.D. 1842. in a condition to move forward to force the pass. The task was accomplished, not indeed without difficulty, but with complete success. Two columns were formed to storm the heights, while a third advanced to the mouth of the pass. The severer duty fell to the lot of the flanking columns, the right of which was under Lieutenant-Colonel Taylor, of her Majesty's 9th foot, and Major Anderson, 64th native infantry; the left under Lieutenant-Colonel Mosely, of the 64th native infantry, and Major Huish, of the 26th native infantry. The conduct of some jezailgees, under Captain Ferris, was highly spoken of by General Pollock. The arrangements for the protection of the baggage were so complete, that not a single baggage animal was lost. This immunity from plunder is attributable to General M'Caskill, who commanded the rear-guard. After

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this encounter, General Pollock experienced little opposition until he arrived in safety, and happily in due time, at Jelalabad.

Kandahar continued to be maintained by General Nott, who, like Sir Robert Sale, refused to recognize the treaty concluded at Kabool, or to yield obedience to the order extorted from General Elphinstone for the surrender of the place. On the

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7th of March he moved out of the city, with the larger part of his force, to attack the enemy, drove them before him across the Turnack, and then across the Urgundab. On the 9th, he was able to approach sufficiently near to open his guns on them, when they dispersed in every direction and in comparative safety, General Nott being unprovided with cavalry adequate to the task of pursuit. During his absence a strong detachment of the enemy made an attack on the city, and succeeded in burning one of the gates, but they were repulsed, with great loss, by the officer in command of the garrison, Major Lane, of the 2nd regiment of Bengal native infantry.

Less fortunate was an attempt to relieve Kandahar from Sinde. For this purpose Brigadier England, with an inconsiderable force, advanced through the Bolan pass, and arrived safely at Quetta. It was his intention to proceed through the valley of Pisheen to the village of Hykulzie, and there to wait the arrival of reinforcements coming up through the pass; but on reaching the entrance of a defile leading to the village, he unexpectedly found Ma-

homed Sadig, an insurgent chief, strongly posted in the pass and on the contiguous heights, to oppose his progress. The difficulty of acquiring accurate information in a country like that in which the British government were now carrying on war, the danger of relying on friendly professions, which, in the East, are bestowed with a reckless profusion proportioned to their want of sincerity, were here illustrated. At a village only six miles from the mouth of the defile, the British commander and his officers had been received by the chief men of the place with the greatest show of cordiality; but, though minutely questioned as to the state of the country, their friendliness did not suffer them to proceed to the length of warning General England of the resistance which awaited him. When the first symptoms of opposition appeared, it was believed that the force of the enemy was small, and four light companies, supported by a small reserve under cover of four guns, were ordered to attack the hill. The strength of the enemy was concealed behind a succession of breastworks, with a ditch and abattis, until the British advance party reached the crest of his exterior defence, when a vast body sprang into view, and it became evident that the contest could not be advantageously maintained. The four companies engaged consequently fell back on the supporting column, which had to sustain an attack from the enemy's cavalry, who, on the retreat of the assaulting party, rushed down from the hills. Their efforts to break the column were, however,

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unavailing, and the entire British force moved off in good order and without loss of baggage. Subsequently, General England deemed it advisable to fall back to Quetta. This abortive attempt was attended by the loss of ninety-eight men, killed and wounded. Among the killed were two British officers, Captain W. May, of her Majesty's 41st, and Major Apthorp, of the 20th Bombay native infantry.

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On the preceding day Colonel G. P. Wymer, commanding a foraging party dispatched from Kandahar, dispersed with great brilliancy a large body of the enemy's cavalry, who hung upon him and threatened the security of his convoy.

In the month of April an event happened which, though of little political importance in itself, may be regarded as relieving the British government from one source of embarrassment in dealing with the affairs of Affghanistan—Shah Shoojah was murdered. Had his life been prolonged, it is not to be supposed that exertions to maintain him on his throne would have been persisted in. British rulers, both at home and in India, were heartily weary of the connection with Affghanistan; and the only questions to be solved were, in what manner and how quickly could it be dissolved? In a communication from the governor-general in council to the commander-in-chief, Sir Jasper Nicolls, dated

A.D. 1842. 15th March, the following observations occur:—

"The commanders of the forces in Upper and Lower Affghanistan will, in all the operations they may

design, bear in mind these general views and opinions of the government of India. They will in the first instance endeavour to relieve all the garrisons in Affghanistan which are now surrounded by the enemy. The relief of these garrisons is a point deeply affecting the military character of the army, and deeply interesting the feelings of their country; but to make a rash attempt to effect such relief in any case without a reasonable prospect of success, would be to afford no real aid to the brave men who are surrounded, and fruitlessly to sacrifice other good soldiers, whose preservation is equally dear to the government they serve. To effect the relief of the prisoners taken at Kabool is an object likewise deeply interesting in point of feeling and of honour. That object can probably only be accomplished by taking hostages from such part of the country as may be in or may come into our possession; and with reference to this object, and to that of the relief of Ghuznee,* it may possibly become a question, in the event of Major-general Pollock effecting a junction with Sir Robert Sale, whether the united force shall return to the country below the Khyber pass, or take a forward position near Jelalabad, or even advance to Kabool. We are fully sensible of the advantages which would be derived from the re-occupation of Kabool, the scene of our great disaster, and of so much crime, even for a week, of the means which it might afford of recovering the prisoners, of the gratification which it would give to

* The fall of this place was not then known.

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the army, and of the effect which it would have upon our enemies. Our withdrawal might then be made to rest upon an official declaration of the grounds on which we retired as solemn as that which accompanied our advance, and we should retire as a conquering, not as a defeated power; but we cannot sanction the occupation of an advanced position beyond the Khyber pass by Major-General Pollock, unless that general should be satisfied that he can—without depending upon the forbearance of the tribes near the pass, which, obtained only by purchase, must, under all circumstances, be precarious, and without depending upon the fidelity of the Seik chiefs, or upon the power of those chiefs to restrain their troops, upon neither of which can any reliance be safely placed—feel assured that he can by his own strength overawe and overcome all who dispute the pass, and keep up at all times his communication with Peshawur and the Indus." Similar feelings appear to have been entertained before the arrival of the new governor-general. In a letter of instruction, addressed to Sir Jasper Nicolls shortly before the departure of Lord Auckland,* even the maintenance of Jelalabad is spoken of as an event scarcely to be hoped for. Intelligence, then recently received, is said to have convinced the government that, excepting under some very unforeseen change, no sufficient advantage would be derived from an attempt to retain possession of Jelalabad for any prolonged period

* Under date February 10th, 1842.

during the present season. "The fate," it is continued, "of the gallant garrison of that place will probably have been determined before the intimation of our opinion to the above effect can reach Major-General Pollock. But we would request your excellency, without delay, to inform the major-general that the main inducement for the maintenance of a post at Jelalabad, namely, that of being a point of support to any of our troops escaping from Kabool, having now, it must be feared, unhappily passed away, it is the object of the government that he should, unless any unforeseen contingency should give a decidedly favourable turn to affairs, confine himself to measures for withdrawing the Jelalabad garrison in safety to Peshawur, and there for the present holding together all the troops under his orders in a secure position, removed from collision with the Seikh forces or subjects." A few days afterwards,* the following instruction, among others, was transmitted to General Pollock by the government of India, Lord Auckland being still at its head. "On the whole, you will understand that the great present object of your proceedings in Peshawur is, beyond the safe withdrawal of the force at Jelalabad, that of watching events, of keeping up such communications as may be admissible with the several parties who may acquire power in the northern portion of Affghanistan, of committing yourself permanently with none of those parties, but also of declaring positively against none of

* 24th February, 1842.

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them, while you are collecting the most accurate information of their relative strength and purposes for report to the government, and pursuing the measures which you may find in your power for procuring the safe return of our troops and people detained beyond the Khyber pass." There was, therefore, no substantial difference on this point between the views of the retiring governor-general and those entertained by his successor. General Pollock, who, from being on the spot, as well as from his military knowledge and habits, could best appreciate the difficulties around him, appears, even previous to his advance through the Khyber pass, to have been deeply impressed with a sense of the fatal consequences, temporary and permanent, which must follow the sudden abandonment of all hope of again establishing British superiority in Affghanistan. "If," he observed, "I were to advance with the intention of merely withdrawing the garrison of Jelalabad, my success in advancing must chiefly depend on concealing my intentions; for although (if I succeed in any negotiation to open the pass) every precaution will be taken by me to secure a retreat, I must expect that every man will rise to molest our return, as they would be left to the mercy of the Affghan rulers; and I must confess I sincerely believe that our return here, unless I have first an opportunity of inflicting some signal punishment on the enemy, would have a very bad effect both far and near."*

* Letter to Lieutenant-Colonel Luard, February 27th, 1842.

The receipt of the intelligence of the fall of Ghuznee, and of the check received by General England in attempting to advance to Kandahar, seems to have added to the desponding feelings entertained in the highest quarters, and orders were transmitted to General Nott to take immediate means for drawing off the garrison of Kelat-i-Ghilzie, to evacuate Kandahar, and to take up a position at Quetta. "The object of the above-directed measures," it was added, "is to withdraw all our forces to Sukkur, at the earliest period at which the season and other circumstances may permit you to take up a new position there." Subsequently, the governor-general heard of the defeat of the enemy by Sir Robert Sale before Jelalabad, and of the easy retreat of General England to Quetta, but neither of these events seems in his mind to have excited any sanguine hope. In a despatch to the secret committee, dated Benares, 22nd April, after adverting to these transactions, the governor-general continues: "These several events, although they improve our prospects to some extent, have in no respect altered my deliberate opinion that it is expedient to withdraw the troops under Major-General Pollock and those under Major-General Nott, at the earliest practicable period, into positions wherein they may have certain and easy communication with India. That opinion is founded upon a general view of our military, political, and financial situation, and is not liable to be lightly changed." Three days before the date of the despatch last

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quoted, the governor-general, being then aware that General Pollock had entered the Khyber pass, and concluding that he had effected a junction with Sir Robert Sale, thus wrote to Sir Jasper Nicolls, in reference to a previous request that the commander-in-chief would issue instructions which might be necessary for the guidance of General Pollock:—"The object of the instructions which will thus be given to those officers * is to bring their respective corps into easy and certain communication with India. What ulterior destination may be given to those corps when that of Major-General Nott, having drawn off the garrison of Kelat-i-Ghilzie, shall be concentrated ultimately in the vicinity of Sukkur, and that of Major-General Pollock, having drawn off the garrison of Jelalabad, shall be again on this side of the Khyber pass, is a matter for the most serious consideration." After expressing a wish to confer with the commander-in-chief on the subject, and adverting to the possibility of selecting a new line of operations, if aggressive measures should be deemed necessary, his lordship adds the following remark, clearly shewing the tendency of his own judgment: "It will, however, likewise be for consideration, whether our troops, having been redeemed from the state of peril in which they have been placed in Affghanistan, and it may still be hoped not without the infliction of some severe

* His lordship had referred to his own instructions to General Nott, as well as to those requested for General Pollock, and seems here to speak of both.

blow upon the Affghan army, it would be justifiable again to push them for no other object than that of revenging our losses and of re-establishing in all its original brilliancy our military character."* Sir Jasper Nicolls hesitated to give the required instructions, and thus wrote in answer to the demand for their issue. "I have not ventured to give any instructions to Major-General Pollock. The fifth, ninth, tenth, and eleventh paragraphs of your orders of the 15th March must now guide him.† It is for him alone to decide between the practicability of a forward movement, either upon Kabool or Gundamuck (or its vicinity), and the withdrawal of the whole force to Peshawur. The general is a clear-headed officer, and you have loaded his advance with heavy cautions."‡

So anxious, however, was the governor-general that instructions of the proposed tenor should be conveyed to General Pollock, and so opposed was he at that time, not merely to an advance, but to maintaining the positions yet held by the British in Affghanistan, that, on being apprized of the hesitation of the commander-in-chief, he took upon himself the task of making to General Pollock a communication of the nature which he had suggested. It is thus conveyed in a letter from the secretary to government,

* Letter from the governor-general to Sir Jasper Nicolls, 19th April, 1842.

† The whole of the 9th paragraph and part of the 10th are quoted, pp. 342, 343, and 344.

‡ Letter of Sir Jasper Nicolls to governor-general, 27th April, 1842.

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with the governor-general :—" The aspect of affairs in Upper Affghanistan appears to be such, according to the last advices received by the governor-general, that his lordship cannot but contemplate the possibility of your having been led, by the absence of serious opposition on the part of any army in the field, by the divisions amongst the Affghan chiefs, and by the natural desire you must, in common with every true soldier, have of displaying again the British flag in triumph upon the scene of our late disasters, to advance upon and occupy the city of Kabool. If that event should have occurred, you will understand that it will in no respect vary the view which the governor-general previously took of the policy now to be pursued. The governor-general will adhere to the opinion, that the only safe course is that of withdrawing the army under your command, at the earliest practicable period, into positions within the Kyber pass, where it may possess easy and certain communication with India."* A further communication was, at the same time, made to Major Outram, with a view to the movements of the British forces in Lower Affghanistan. For reasons which do not appear, Sir Jasper Nicolls, on

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the 29th April, did forward instructions of the character required by the governor-general. They directed General Pollock to "withdraw every British soldier from Jelalabad to Peshawur," to "destroy the fort and any useless guns;" but, it was added, "as there need be no haste in the retreat, when

* Letter from Mr. Maddock to Major-General Pollock, 28th April, 1842.

commenced, you are requested not to leave any trophies." These orders were qualified by reference to three circumstances, as authorizing, not any wide departure from them, but delay in obeying them. They are thus enumerated. "First, that you may have brought a negotiation for the release of the prisoners lately confined at Buddeeabad to such a point, that you might risk its happy accomplishment by withdrawing. Second, that you may have detached a lightly equipped force to endeavour to rescue them. Third, that the enemy at Kabool may be moving a force to attack you. In this improbable case, should any respectable number of troops have descended into the plain below Jugdulluk with that intent, it would be most advisable to inflict such a blow upon them as to make them long remember your parting effort." The exceptions under the first and second head were limited by the following observations. "I do not recommend delay in the first case, unless the prisoners are actually on their way to your camp, as no faith can be placed in Affghan promises. The second would of course require that you should await the return of the detachment. I allude entirely to the officers and ladies now or lately at Buddeeabad or its vicinity. Those at Kabool cannot, I think, be saved by any treaty or agreement made under existing circumstances at Jelalabad."* In ignorance of the issue of these instructions, the governor-general, on the 4th May, A.D. 1842.

* Letter from Sir Jasper Nicolls to Major-General Pollock, April 29th, 1842.

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caused a further communication to be made to General Pollock, enforcing the views previously propounded, representing that they had derived additional strength from the victory of Sir Robert Sale and the death of Shah Shoojah, and avowing an expectation that the general had already decided upon withdrawing his troops within the Khyber pass. "The first object of the governor-general's anxiety," it was observed, "has ever been to withdraw with honour into positions of security the several corps of the army which he found scattered and surrounded in Affghanistan. That object," it was added, "may now be accomplished, as respects the army under your command."*

The quotations that have been made from the despatches of the government of India shew an accordance between the views of Lord Auckland and Lord Ellenborough, as to the course to be pursued with regard to Affghanistan; and they equally shew that those views tended to an evacuation of the country with the greatest possible celerity. It has been shewn, too, that the judgment of some at least of the military authorities was not in favour of this policy. That Sir Jasper Nicolls hesitated to give orders for carrying it into effect, and yielded at last, perhaps rather from a feeling of deference to the governor-general than from any change in his own opinion; while General Pollock, "a good and clear-headed officer," as he was well characterized by the

* Letter from Mr. Maddock to Major-General Pollock, 4th May, 1842.

commander-in-chief, was anxious that some step should be taken to assert the honour of the British name, and disperse the clouds which had been permitted to enshroud it. This feeling was shared by General Nott. As soon as he had reason to doubt the intentions of the government to "redeem the credit of the British arms in Affghanistan," he remonstrated strongly against the indulgence of any craven feeling. Adverting to the noble retention of Jelalabad by Sir Robert Sale, to the reinforcements advanced for its support, and to the unfavourable effect which the abandonment of Kandahar must have upon the means in progress for the relief of the former place, he said, "Under these circumstances, I never had a moment's hesitation as to the course I ought to pursue, so long as discretionary power was left me; and all my arrangements have consequently been made with a view to the present maintenance and future extension, should such prove desirable, of our power in this country."* After dwelling on the importance of standing fast, both at Kandahar and Jelalabad, he says, "If government intend to recover, even temporarily, and for the security of our national honour, their lost position in this country, even if doubtful of the policy that it may be deemed expedient to pursue, I earnestly hope that before any immediate retrograde step is made in either direction, our whole position in Affghanistan will be attentively viewed; and that the effect which

* Letter to Mr. Maddock, 24th March, 1842.

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a hasty retirement would certainly and instantly have upon the whole of Beloochistan, and even in the navigation of the Indus, will be taken into consideration. At the present time, the impression of our military strength among the people of this country, though weakened by the occurrences at Kabool, is not destroyed; but if we now retire, and it should again become necessary to advance, we shall labour under many disadvantages, the most serious of which, in my opinion, will be a distrust of their strength among our soldiers, which any admission of weakness is so well calculated to insure: and in what other light could a withdrawal from Jelalabad or Kandahar be viewed?"* In a subsequent letter General Nott says, "Perhaps it is not within my province to observe, that, in my humble opinion, an unnecessary alarm has been created regarding the position of our troops in this country, and of the strength and power of the enemy we have to contend with. This enemy cannot face our troops in the field with any chance of success, however superior they may be in numbers, provided those precautions are strictly observed which war between a small body of disciplined soldiers and a vast crowd of untrained, unorganized, and half-civilized people constantly renders necessary. True, the British troops suffered a dreadful disaster at Kabool; and it is not for me to presume to point out why this happened, however evident I may

* Letter to Mr. Maddock, 24th March, 1842.

conceive the reasons, and the long train of political and military events which led to the sad catastrophe."*

It thus appears that the military commanders in Affghanistan, certainly the best judges, were far more sanguine, as to the probability of a successful advance, than was either Lord Auckland or Lord Ellenborough. On the 4th of May, the latter A.D. 1842. nobleman, addressing General Pollock, declared his views as to the immediate retirement of the British troops to be unaltered. On the 6th, writing to Sir Jasper Nicolls, he expressed his approbation of the orders for such retirement, issued by the commander-in-chief. On the 14th his views, however, appear to have undergone a change. Again addressing Sir Jasper Nicolls, his lordship seemed disposed to acquiesce in the retention, for a time, of the positions held by the British commanders. The change is apparently to be ascribed to a communication of the opinion of General Pollock, and of that of the

* Letter to Mr. Maddock, 18th April, 1842. In a letter to General England, of the same date, General Nott makes some remarks highly characteristic, and in every way worthy of the country to which he belonged. "The people of this country cannot withstand our troops in the open field. I am well aware that war cannot be made without loss, but I yet hope that British troops can oppose Asiatic armies without defeat; and I feel and know that British officers should never despair of punishing the atrocious and treacherous conduct of a brutal enemy. * * * I feel obliged to you for pointing out the many difficulties attending our position; but you are well aware that it is our first and only duty to overcome difficulties when the national honour and our military reputation are so deeply concerned."

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commander-in-chief, Sir Jasper Nicolls. Those opinions were to the effect, that neither the army at Jelalabad, nor that at Kandahar, could properly commence their return march till the autumn. The language of his lordship, however, is that of toleration, rather than of approval. "The advance of the season," he observes, "which really renders the retirement of Major-General Pollock, at the present moment, a measure of some hazard to the health of his troops—the improved facilities which the major-general finds of obtaining supplies of provisions—but more than all, the influence which those now about him, anxious to vindicate the army by some signal blow against the Affghans, and to effect the restoration of the prisoners to liberty by negotiation, supported by force, must necessarily have upon his mind—all these things induce me to apprehend that it will hardly be until October that the major-general will commence his homeward march. Your excellency is of opinion that Major-General Nott cannot safely commence his march to the plains before the same time. It will, therefore, probably not be until the end of November that the army of Major-General Pollock, nor until the end of December that the army under Major-General Nott, will be established within the British territory."* In this letter it is also announced to be the intention of Lord Ellenborough to assemble an army of reserve, in a position from which it

* Letter from the governor-general to Sir Jasper Nicolls, 14th May, 1842.

might advance to the support of either General Pollock or General Nott, a step represented as necessary for the purpose of misleading the Affghans as to the design of the British government to withdraw its armies from the country, "even," it is added, "were there no other object." The other object contemplated is explained to be that of overawing the states of India—a very important one at a period when the influence of the British name had suffered serious diminution. In the Punjab and other countries bordering on the British territories there were sufficient causes for alarm to warrant such a measure, without reference to any endeavour to retrace the march to Kabool. Indeed, such a march seems to have been as remote as ever from the contemplation of the governor-general; and in a letter addressed, on the 25th of May, to Mr. Clerk, resident at Lahore, the opinion formerly expressed,* as to the maintenance, by General Pollock, of an advanced position beyond the Khyber Pass, is again emphatically brought forward. On the 29th of the same month, a communication was made to the general, to prevent his misinterpreting the orders which he had received to retire so as to give the qualified permission to remain a wider range than was intended. The supposed necessity for this caution seems hardly reconcilable with the previous assent of the governor-general to the maintenance of the British positions till October.

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A further communication made to General

* See page 344.

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Pollock on behalf of the governor-general, bearing date the 1st of June, is couched almost in terms of reproach. After expressing extreme regret that the want of carriage should have rendered the army unable to move, it thus continues: "The retirement of your army immediately after the victory gained by Sir Robert Sale, the forcing of the Khyber Pass, and the relief of Jelalabad, would have had the appearance of a military operation successfully accomplished and even triumphantly achieved. Its retirement, after six months of inaction, before a following army of Affghans, will have an appearance of a different and less advantageous character. It would be desirable, undoubtedly, that, before finally quitting Affghanistan, you should have an opportunity of striking a blow at the enemy; and since circumstances seem to compel you to remain there till October, the governor-general earnestly hopes that you may be enabled to draw the enemy into a position in which you may strike such a blow effectually."*

To multiply quotations from official papers, and references to such documents, may be tedious, but

* In another part of this despatch, the following passage occurs: "It will be for your consideration, whether your large army, one-half of which would beat in open field every thing that could be brought against it in Affghanistan, should remain entirely inactive during the period which must now apparently elapse before it can finally retire!" General Pollock was not the man to allow his army to remain inactive, when any thing could be gained, either for the honour or interest of his country, by putting it in motion.

in this case it is necessary, in order that it may be distinctly apparent to whom the merit or the blame of the course ultimately taken is due. On the 6th of June the governor-general caused a further communication to be made to General Pollock, intended, like a former one, to guard him against misconceiving his orders. In one of his letters, General Pollock had adverted to the proposed transfer of Jelalabad to the Seiks, and expressed a belief that he should receive a communication on the subject from the resident at Lahore. The object of the governor-general's explanatory intimation was to warn General Pollock that he was not expected to defer his departure from Jelalabad till it should be decided whether the place should or should not be given up to the Seiks, in case that decision should be protracted. Here again, as it was understood and admitted that the British force was not to move till October, there seems to have been little necessity for the extreme anxiety displayed to guard against misapprehension on the point.

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The state of affairs in Lower Affghanistan now claims attention. General England, on retiring to Quetta, after the repulse which he experienced in attempting to advance, commenced fortifying the lines and town of that name; but General Nott requiring him again to advance through the Kojuck Pass, and undertaking to dispatch a strong force to meet him, the general, having in the meantime been joined by his expected reinforcements, re-

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sumed the march so unfortunately interrupted at Hykulzie. Near that place he again found the enemy posted in a strong position; but on being attacked they rapidly dispersed, and General England and his force arrived at Kandahar with little further interruption.

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In May, General Nott, in obedience to his orders, dispatched a large force, under Lieutenant-Colonel Wymer, to bring off the garrison of Khelat-i-Ghiljie. On the 20th of May that place was attacked by a body of Ghiljies, consisting of upwards of two thousand. It was gallantly defended by Captain J. Halsell Craigie; and the enemy, after an hour's hard fighting, were beaten back with severe loss. On the 29th of the same month, advantage was taken by the enemy of the reduced strength of the force at Kandahar, caused by the detachment of the troops under Colonel Wymer, to occupy some hills near the city of Kandahar, believing that the force left after marching the detachment was not sufficient to admit of holding the city, and at the same time making an attack in the field. But they were mistaken. General Nott moved out with portions of her Majesty's 41st regiment, the 42nd and 43rd Bengal native infantry, the Bombay light battalion, the 25th Bombay native infantry, the Poonah and the Shah's 1st cavalry, with a detail of horse artillery, and twelve guns. The enemy were in great strength, mustering about eight thousand in position, and two thousand more engaged in guarding the pass and roads leading to their camp.

The troops under General Nott amounted only to about a thousand infantry, two hundred and fifty cavalry, and something more than a hundred artillerymen; but the great disparity of numerical strength availed nothing—the positions of the enemy were rapidly carried in the most gallant style, and in less than an hour.

Colonel Wymer having performed the duty of destroying the works at Kelat-i-Ghiljie, escorted the guns and ammunition in safety to Kandahar. One part of the governor-general's orders was thus fulfilled, much against the inclination of the officer holding the chief command in Lower Affghanistan. General Nott had intended to throw supplies into the place, to make an effort to recover the garrison of Ghuznee from the hands of the enemy, and to make a diversion in aid of General Pollock. All these measures were delayed, and part of them entirely defeated by the instructions received from the governor-general, whose only object, as he avowed, was to effect the safe return to India, of the British troops in Affghanistan. He had acquiesced in their temporary stay at the positions which they occupied, but this was all, and the concession was obviously made with reluctance. There can be no danger of misrepresenting his lordship's views, for his efforts to prevent their being mistaken were unceasing. On the 4th of July he caused a letter to be addressed to General Pollock, with reference to a movement contemplated by that officer. Satisfaction was expressed that the means of making the

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intended movement existed, and credit was taken for suggesting it.* But the general was cautioned

* So again Lord Ellenborough wrote on the 8th of July to the secret committee :—" My instructions of the 1st ultimo to Major-General Pollock have *induced* him to contemplate a forward movement of such portion of his army as he has equipment for." Certainly, the word " induced " was never more inappropriately used. General Pollock wanted no inducement; and to enable the reader to judge whether he received any, the whole of the rousing instructions referred to are submitted. A small portion has been quoted in the text at page 358; but to avoid all appearance of unfairness, the instructions are here given entire.

" I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 20th ultimo, and to express the extreme regret of the governor-general that your army should be so deficient in carriage as you represent, and thus unable to move.

" The retirement of your army immediately after the victory gained by Sir Robert Sale, the forcing of the Khyber Pass, and the relief of Jelalabad, would have had the appearance of a military operation successfully accomplished, and even triumphantly achieved.

" Its retirement, after six months of inaction, before a following army of Affghans, will have an appearance of a different and less advantageous character.

" It would be desirable, undoubtedly, that, before finally quitting Affghanistan, you should have an opportunity of striking a blow at the enemy; and since circumstances seem to compel you to remain there till October, the governor-general earnestly hopes that you may be enabled to draw the enemy into a position in which you may strike such a blow effectually. You have already full powers to do every thing you may deem necessary for the comfort of your troops, and for their efficiency.

" The officers, termed political agents, well acquainted with the country, and with the people, are at your disposal, for the purpose of aiding you in the equipment of your army.

" The governor-general will request the commander-in-chief to select an officer who may be solely responsible for the procuring for your army of the means of movement, and bring into

not to mistake the governor-general's views, in which he was again emphatically informed, "no efficient co-operation all the several persons now employed for that purpose. This officer will be directed to report weekly to the governor-general, and to the commander-in-chief, and to you.

"It will be for your consideration whether your large army, one-half of which would beat, in open field, every thing that could be brought against it in Affghanistan, should remain entirely inactive during the period which must now apparently elapse before it can finally retire. Although you may not have, or soon be able to procure, the means of moving your whole army, you may possibly be able to move a part of it rapidly against some portion of the enemy's force incautiously exposed, and of giving it a severe blow.

"You may possibly be able to throw a portion of your force over the Kabool river, for the purpose of a chuppow, and of bringing in prisoners of importance, whom you may use in exchange. You may make your strength severely felt by sallies of this description, should they be practicable, and create a strong desire, on the part of the enemy, to induce you to leave the country.

"You will recollect, in all you undertake, that you must keep your communications in your own power, and not depend upon Seiks or Afreedees.

"The Seiks you will endeavour to induce to occupy the left bank of the Kabool river, so that the road to your rear may be always unencumbered and free.

"You have properly no political duties; you are to be governed by military considerations alone, to make the force you have at your disposal felt by the enemy, whenever you can, and withdraw it at the earliest period, consistently with its health and efficiency, into positions wherein you may have easy and certain communication with India. The execution of these military objects will, of itself, accomplish all the political objects which the government now has in Affghanistan.

"It has already been intimated to General Nott that it is expected that considerations, connected with the season and the health of his troops, will not enable him to withdraw below the passes till October."

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change" had "from the first taken place." On the same day (so anxious was his lordship not to be misunderstood), General Nott also was addressed for the purpose of guarding him against being misled by the activity of General Pollock. A copy of the cherished instructions of the 1st of June was transmitted with the letter to General Nott, in order that he might not suppose that any change had taken place in the main object of the instructions heretofore furnished. On the same day, however, other letters were addressed to General Pollock and General Nott, which letters were withheld from the records for the sake, it was alleged, of secrecy. The letter to General Pollock consisted only of a few lines, calling his attention to the letter to General Nott, of which a copy was inclosed to him, and suggesting that, in the event of the latter officer taking a particular course, the movements of General Pollock should be regulated accordingly. The letter to General Nott was the important one, and its extraordinary character will justify an extended notice of its contents. It commenced by referring to the understanding that General Nott should not move towards the Indus till October; and after adverting to the despatch of Colonel Wymer to Kelat-i-Ghiljie, and to a supply of camels recently received at Kandahar, thus proceeded:—"I have now, therefore, reason to suppose, for the first time, that you have the means of moving a very large proportion of your army, with ample equipment for any service. There has been no

deficiency of provisions at Kandahar at any time, and, after harvest, you will have an abundant supply." It would not be easy to conjecture to what this prelude was to lead, but it could hardly be expected to lead to what actually follows it. "Nothing has occurred to induce me to change my first opinion, that the measure commanded by considerations of political and military prudence is to bring back the armies now in Affghanistan, at the earliest period at which their retirement can be effected consistently with the health and efficiency of the troops, into positions where they may have easy and certain communication with India, and to this extent the instructions you have received remain unaltered." The matter of the above passage has been repeated so often, and nearly in the same words, that it is calculated to excite no surprise, excepting from the exordium by which it is ushered into notice. That which succeeds offers more of novelty. "But the improved position of your army, with sufficient means of carriage for as large a force as it is necessary to move in Affghanistan, induces me now to leave to your option the line by which you shall withdraw your troops from that country." The words, "improved position of your army," did not, of course, apply to local position, for the army was still at Kandahar, where it had been many months. They must have referred to the supplies of ammunition, treasure, and medicines which had relieved General Nott from the chief causes of his difficulties, and perhaps more particularly to the means of carriage

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placed at his disposal. In furnishing these articles, the governor-general had been most laudably active; and, therefore, the "improved position" of General Nott must have been a "position" which he had for some time contemplated. It is not to be supposed that while exerting himself so laboriously and so honourably, he acted under a persuasion that all his efforts would be thrown away; and why, therefore, he should express a feeling almost approaching to surprise on finding that General Nott's situation was improved, it is not easy to conceive. His lordship proceeds to weigh the comparative advantages of retiring by the line of Quetta and Sukkur, and by that of Ghuznee, Kabool, and Jelalabad; shewing the practicability and ease of passing by the former, and pointing out in very discouraging language the danger and difficulties of the latter. The leaning of Lord Ellenborough's mind was obviously in favour of the easier and less hazardous course; and had such instructions as those under notice been addressed to one not strong in a just confidence in his own judgment, the effect must have been to have turned the scale in favour of such a course. It is not to be believed that the governor-general purposely framed his orders so as to screen himself in any case from blame, while he might secure some share of the praise due to successful enterprise, if enterprise should be determined on. This is not even to be imagined; but if the existence of such an intention could be credited, he might have been expected to issue instructions precisely like

those which were actually transmitted by him to General Nott; issued, as it must be concluded that they were, in an honest and sincere spirit, they must be regarded as relieving the governor-general from all responsibility as to the line of march from Kandahar, but at the same time as depriving him of any claim to praise in respect of that march beyond that which is due to successful exertion in providing the means of making it. His lordship writes: "I do not undervalue the aid which our government in India would receive from the successful execution, by your army, of a march through Ghuznee and Kabool, over the scene of our late disasters. I know all the effect which it would have upon the minds of our soldiers, of our allies, of our enemies in Asia, and of our countrymen, and of all foreign nations in Europe. It is an object of just ambition, which no one more than myself would rejoice to see effected, but I see that failure in the attempt is certain and irretrievable ruin, and I would endeavour to inspire you with the necessary caution, and make you feel that, great as are the objects to be obtained by success, the risk is great also." Subsequently, his lordship speaks of the movement on Kabool as an "adventurous march," and the tone of the instructions in respect to it is uniformly discouraging and desponding. In a letter to General Nott, dated July 10th, the same tone was preserved. A copy of a letter from General Pollock was inclosed, and it was intimated that efforts were in progress to increase the amount

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of carriage at the disposal of the latter officer, but it was added, that the terror of Affghanistan operated so strongly on the drivers, that extensive desertion might be apprehended, and that the animals which left Ferozepore might never reach Jelalabad. General Nott was warned that his success in marching upon Kabool must in a great measure depend on the support to be expected from General Pollock, and the dangers to be apprehended in passing Gundamuck were pressed upon his attention; after which the governor-general thus continued, maintaining strictly the tone of his previous letter: "The return of your two armies to India in a state of efficiency is of more importance than any success you might obtain at a great cost of men; and, as I have already told you, the occurrence of another great reverse would be of very fatal consequence." Writing to General Pollock a few days afterwards, when, as his lordship stated, he expected General Nott was in possession of his letter of the 4th, above quoted, he says: "My expectation is, that Major-General Nott will feel himself sufficiently strong, and be sufficiently provided with carriage, to march upon Ghuznee and Kabool." Believing, therefore, that General Nott was sufficiently strong to take this step, the governor-general had notwithstanding held language calculated to make the commander doubt its success; and which, if addressed to many men, would certainly have led to its abandonment. With General Nott it had no such effect. The opening sentence of the gallant officer's answer contains the

pith of his decision, and well deserves to be quoted, on account of its soldierly character. "Having well considered the subject of your lordship's letter of the 4th instant; having looked at the difficulties in every point of view, and reflected on the advantages which would attend a successful accomplishment of such a move, and the moral influence it would have throughout Asia, I have come to a determination to retire a portion of the army under my command, viâ Ghuznee and Kabool.* I shall take with me not a large but a compact and well-tried force, on which I can rely. Your lordship may rest assured that all prudence and every military precaution shall be observed: there shall be no unnecessary risk; and, if expedient, I will mask Ghuznee and even Kabool. But if an opportunity should offer, I will endeavour to strike a decisive blow for the honour of our arms."†

It now remains to trace the progress of the gallant armies permitted to vindicate the reputation of the government and country which they served.

* It seems strange to speak of *retirement* from Kandahar by Ghuznee and Kabool, but the phrase was the governor-general's, and only adopted by General Nott.

† Letter from General Nott to governor-general, 26th of July, 1842. The confidence placed by General Nott in his troops, and his own ardent attachment to them, are displayed in a letter which he wrote to General Pollock, 30th of May, 1842, giving an account of the withdrawal of the garrison of Kelat-i-Ghilzie, and the attack made upon Kandahar during the absence of the troops employed in the duty. After narrating the gallant conduct of his men, he says, with the enthusiasm of one whose heart was in the subject, "I would at any time lead 1,000 Bengal sepoys against 5,000 Affghans. * * * * My beautiful regiment are in high health and spirits."

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The first event to be noticed is the destruction of thirty-five forts in the Shinwavee valley, a short distance from Jelalabad. This service was performed by a force under the command of Brigadier Monteath. The enemy from some adjacent heights contemplated their blazing forts as long as they were allowed to occupy the situation; but their enjoyment of the spectacle was interrupted by an attack from part of the British force, led by Major Skinner, of her Majesty's 31st, which, aided by a few shrapnels, completely cleared the eminences.

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General Pollock moved from Jelalabad on the 20th of August, and on the 23rd was at Gundamuk. Here he learned that a body of the enemy, under two chiefs, held the fort and village of Mammoo Khail, about two miles distant, and he determined to attack them on the following morning. Accordingly, at four o'clock, he moved towards the enemy with her Majesty's 9th foot, the 26th and 60th Bengal native infantry, two squadrons of light cavalry, some sappers and miners, and a light field battery. The enemy at first made a show of resistance, and continued in position so long that it was hoped they intended to resist with their entire force; but they retired as the British troops advanced, and the latter entered the village. The fort and another village in the vicinity were speedily occupied by British troops; others drove the enemy from the hills. Upon the more elevated and precipitous of these a stand was sometimes made, and a sharp fire

of jezails maintained. But the vigour with which the various attacks were pressed rendered these attempts unavailing, and the whole of the enemy's camp equipage, with their carriage cattle, fell into the hands of the English.

General Pollock remained at Gundamuk till the 7th of September, when he marched with the 1st division of his army, commanded by Sir Robert Sale; the second division, under General McCaskill, being left to follow on the 8th. On that day the progress of the first division in its advances towards Jugduluk was interrupted; the hills commanding the pass being occupied by the enemy. These hills formed an amphitheatre, inclining towards the left of the road on which the British troops had halted, and the enemy were thus enabled to fire into the column; the intervention of a deep ravine precluding any direct approach to them. Guns were opened upon them, but with little effect; and their fire in return caused several casualties in the British ranks. It was, consequently, necessary that an attempt should be made to force their position. This was effected with great labour, from the steepness of the ground, but with little fighting; the enemy retiring as the British came near them. But the labours of the day were not at an end. A large body of the enemy took up a position still more formidable than that which they had quitted, planting their standards on the summit of a lofty and almost inaccessible mountain, and shewing every demonstration of an intention to defend them.

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From this post of defiance, however, General Pollock determined to dislodge them. In his own words, "the achievements of the day would have been incomplete were they suffered to remain;"* and feeling a just confidence in his troops, he dispatched a portion of them, consisting of her Majesty's 13th, one company of the 6th, one company of the 35th Bengal native infantry, and some sappers, to perform the required duty.

"Seldom," says General Pollock, "have soldiers had a more arduous task to perform, and never was an undertaking of the kind surpassed in execution; these lofty heights were assaulted in two columns, led by Captains Wilkinson and Broadfoot; the discomfited Ghiljies, not relishing an encounter, betook themselves to flight, carrying away their standards, and leaving our troops in quiet possession of their last and least assailable stronghold. It gratifies me," continues the general, "to be enabled to state that we have thus signally defeated, with one division of the troops, the most powerful tribes, and the most inveterate of our enemies, the original instigators and principal actors in those disturbances which entailed such disasters on our troops last winter."† Captain Nugent, sub-assistant commissary-general, was killed in this affair, and Sir Robert Sale slightly wounded.

The first division advanced without further mo-

* Letter to Major-General Lumley, 9th of September, 1842.
† Ibid.

lestation to Tezeen, where they were joined by the second. The cattle belonging to the latter division being fatigued by the march, it was deemed expedient to halt for a day. This was regarded by the enemy as the result of hesitation, and in the afternoon they commenced an attack on the picquets on the left flank. Lieutenant-Colonel Taylor, with two hundred and forty men of her Majesty's 9th, being ordered to drive them back, some sharp fighting took place, and the enemy was forced up the neighbouring hills, from the crests of which they kept up a heavy fire, till they were engaged by Colonel Taylor, who, with a small party, contrived to creep up one of the hills unperceived, and to lie concealed till joined by a few more of his men, when rushing on the flank of the astonished Affghans, he put them to rapid flight, pouring on them a destructive fire as they escaped down the hill. This well-planned and admirably-executed scheme relieved the left flank of the British from the enemy, who forthwith withdrew to the right, where they attacked a picquet of eighty men of the 60th Bengal native infantry, under Lieutenant Montgomery. The assault was met with great intrepidity, and Lieutenant Montgomery succeeded in keeping the enemy off till reinforcements reached him, when they were driven back. So close was the conflict, that recourse was frequently had to the bayonet. Repeated attempts upon the picquets were made during the night, but in no instance with success.

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This was but the prelude to a more serious attack. The valley of Tezeen is completely encircled by lofty hills, and on the morning of the 13th of September, it was perceived that the enemy had occupied in great force every height not previously crowned by the British troops. On the army commencing to march, the enemy's horse appeared in the valley, with the intention of falling upon the baggage, but the dragoons and native cavalry, by a brilliant charge, put them to the rout, and their flight was attended by considerable loss. On the heights the enemy fared no better, though they made an obstinate defence. On the approach of the British, the Affghans, contrary to their usual custom, advanced to meet them, and the thrust of the bayonet in many instances decided the contest. The conflict, however, was not only severe but protracted, the fight being continued through the greater part of the day. The series of passes called Huft Kabul was defended by the Affghans with great obstinacy, but they were driven in succession from all their positions, which were both numerous and strong, and the British signal of three cheers at length announced that the summit had been gained. The victory was complete, and the loss of the enemy in men severe, in addition to that of their guns, and several standards. The number brought by them into the field was about sixteen thousand, and Akbar Khan in person commanded. At the spot where this battle took place the massacre of the British in the early part of the year was consummated, and here they were

now avenged, the energetic representations of the military authorities having happily succeeded in obtaining permission to perform this act of justice.

The loss of the English was only thirty-two killed. The number of wounded was more considerable, being a hundred and thirty. Among the latter were Captain Lushington, of her Majesty's 9th; Captain Geils and Lieutenant Montgomery, of the 60th native infantry; and Lieutenant Norton, of the 58th native infantry. No British officers were killed; but a distinguished native, named Hyder Ali, who commanded the Jezailchees, and who is noticed by General Pollock as "a most gallant and enterprising soldier," fell in the act of seizing one of the enemy's standards. Attacks on the baggage of the British were frequent during the day; but through the vigilance of Lieutenant-Colonel Richmond, commanding the rear-guard, all failed.

The enemy being completely dispersed, General Pollock pursued his march, and encamped at Khoord-Kabool, without encountering further opposition. On the 14th of September he marched to Boothauk, and on the 15th moved on to Kabool, and encamped upon the race-course there. On the following morning, he proceeded with a party of troops to the Bala Hissar; and there, amid the shouts of the soldiery, the roar of artillery, and the inspiring strain of the British national air, planted the colours of his country to wave in proud triumph over the place from whence, a few months before, a miserable band of British subjects had

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crept forth, humiliated, destitute, and spiritless—relying on the sufferance of a treacherous enemy, whose vengeance was soon glutted by their destruction. The counsels of General Pollock and General Nott had prevailed, and here was the result.

The progress of General Pollock has been traced to the spot whence the tarnished honour of the English name called aloud for vindication, and the blood of slaughtered English subjects for punishment on the murderers. It now remains to delineate that of his gallant coadjutor. It has been intimated that General Nott proposed to take only a portion of his force to Ghuznee and Kabool. The rest retired, under General England, by way of Quetta, and pursued their march with little molestation. General Nott commenced his march on the

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9th of August, with her Majesty's 40th and 41st foot, the 2nd, 16th, 38th, 42nd, and 43rd Bengal native infantry, the 3rd Bombay light cavalry, and some irregular horse, a troop of Bombay horse artillery, two companies of foot artillery (one Bengal and one Bombay), a troop of the Shah's native horse artillery, and some sappers. The number of guns was twenty-two, of various calibre. A large stock of ammunition was taken, and forty days' provisions. Nothing beyond the ordinary annoyances of a march through a hostile country occurred, till the 28th of August, when an attack on the rear-guard, by a body of the enemy, required the despatch of some cavalry to disperse the assailants. This duty was satisfactorily performed by two parties of irre-

gulars. A more serious affair occurred on the same day. The enemy having fallen on some grass-cutters, while engaged in their labours, Captain Delamere, of the 3rd Bombay light cavalry, with two companies of that regiment, and about three hundred irregulars, set off to rescue them. The enemy retired precipitately, and led on the British party a considerable distance, till the pursuers unexpectedly confronted a vast force, believed to be the army of Shumsoodeen, the Affghan governor of Ghuznee. Retreat was, of course, inevitable; but it was commenced in an orderly manner. The enemy, however, closing in upon the retreating force, to within fifty or sixty yards of them, and pouring a heavy fire, it became necessary to make an attempt to drive the foe to a greater distance. The squadrons were accordingly ordered to front, and one of them to charge. The charge was intrepidly executed; but a tremendous fire of matchlocks being brought in aid of the enemy's force, their assailants were hurled back in disorder. They rallied at the distance of a few hundred yards, though still under a heavy fire, and the retreat was thenceforward conducted in good order. The loss sustained was heavy, and it included several valuable officers. Captains Bury and Reeves, of the 3rd Bombay cavalry, were killed; the former is said to have cut down four of the enemy before he was overpowered. Captain Ravenscroft and Lieutenant Mackenzie, of the same regiment, and Lieutenant Chamberlain, of the Shah's horse, were wounded, the two former severely.

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The attack on the grass-cutters was said to have proceeded from the occupants of a fort in the vicinity, to which the attention of the British commander was now directed. On his approaching it, some unarmed persons came out to supplicate his forbearance, representing that themselves and their companions had taken no part in the attack. Captain F. White, with the light company of her Majesty's 40th, was thereupon ordered to enter, and ascertain, by examination, whether there was reason to believe the representation to be true; but on advancing, with Major Leech, who acted as interpreter, they were greeted by a volley of matchlock balls. The company, with Captain White, thereupon rushed in, and another company of the 40th, the light company of the 41st, and some companies from native regiments, were ordered to their support. The fort was found full of people, all armed, and resisting. The assailants were infuriated by the treacherous scene just executed before them, and the horrors common on such occasions followed. Every man that was met was put to the sword, the place was set on fire, and in a short time was a mass of blazing ruins.* The hollowness of the assertion by which

* The Rev. J. H. Allen, an assistant chaplain on the Bombay establishment, who was present on the occasion, has given a narrative of the affair in his "Diary of a March through Sinde and Affghanistan," published in 1843. In a despatch, dated 29th of August, 1842, General Nott transmits an account of the dispersion of the party which attacked the grass-cutters early in the morning of the preceding day; but no allusion is made to what followed, though the despatch bears date the day after the occurrence.

it was sought to divert the British commander from attacking the fort was demonstrated by the seizure, among other spoil, of a string of camels bearing the commissariat brand.

On the 30th of August, Shumsoodeen was in the vicinity of the British camp in great force, and General Nott moved out with about half his troops to meet him. The enemy's left was upon a hill of some elevation; their centre and right extended along a low ridge, until their flank reached a fort filled with their men. This fort appears to have been the first object of attack by the British force; and it does not seem that the attempt was successful.* During the time thus occupied, a cannonading was maintained on both sides with apparently no great effect; but on the advance of the British columns the enemy gave way and dispersed in all

Strangely enough, too, in a despatch dated the 31st of August, giving an account of an action on the 30th, a return is forwarded of killed, wounded, and missing, in the engagements with the enemy, on the 28th and 30th of August, 1842; which return contains the names of the officers who suffered in the affair of which no report was made. How it could totally escape notice in official communications, it is impossible to conjecture. That the omission was intentional, is not to be believed; first, because such an intention would not be creditable; and, secondly, because no one could indulge the expectation, that all knowledge of facts witnessed by thousands of men could be suppressed. The only official notice of any part of the later proceedings of the 28th of August is found in a letter from Captain Delamere to the adjutant-general of the army, dated 26th of September, twenty-nine days after the occurrence; and this seems very imperfect.

* The authority of Mr. Allen is here followed. The official report is quite silent on the point.

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directions.* Their tents and an immense quantity of ammunition were captured, and two guns, one of which was broken by the shot of the British, and left on the field, the other brought in by Captain Christie and Lieutenant Chamberlain, of the irregular horse.

A. D. 1842. On the 5th of September, General Nott was before Ghuznee. The hills north of the city were cleared of the enemy and occupied by the British. The camp was established at Rozeh, about two miles and a half distant, and preparations were actively commenced for assault, a principal attack, supported by two false ones, being meditated. Throughout the night the besiegers carried on their preparations, and the enemy appeared to be in some degree on the alert. A brisk matchlock fire had been commenced early in the evening, but it gradually slackened, and after a time ceased altogether. At dusk the enemy's infantry had been observed crossing the river near the water gate, with the intention, it was supposed, of attacking the working party during the night, but in the morning it was ascertained that the place had been evacuated, and before sunrise both town and citadel were in quiet possession of the invaders. There being no enemy, the sole labour of the victors was that of destruction, and the 7th and 8th of September were employed in this work. Fourteen mines were

* The official details of this action are singularly vague and general; but happily it is quite clear that the defeat of the enemy was complete.

sprung in the walls of the citadel, all with effect, and the gateways, both of the citadel and town, with the roofs of the principal buildings, were fired. Among the trophies of success, were the gates of the tomb of Mahomet of Ghuznee, believed previously to have belonged to the temple of Somnauth, respecting which the governor-general had expressed considerable interest. On the 10th, General Nott marched from Ghuznee, and on the 14th and 15th his army had to dislodge about 12,000 men, occupying a succession of heights, and intercepting his march upon Beenee Badan and Mydan. On the 16th, General Nott was at Urghundee, and on the 17th within five miles of Kabool, which city General Pollock had previously entered.

The Affghan war was now drawing to a close. No party had ever contemplated any attempt to re-establish permanently the British power in the country; but it was deemed expedient to dispatch a force under Major-General McCaskill * against Istalif, a rather large and populous town in Koh-i-daman, upwards of twenty miles distant from Kabool, in a north-westerly direction. The force encamped within four miles of the place on the

* Consisting of two eighteen-pounders and a detail of artillery (Bombay), Captain Blood's light field battery, Captain Backhouse's mountain train, head-quarters and two squadrons of her Majesty's 3rd dragoons, one squadron of the 1st light cavalry, Christie's horse (irregular), her Majesty's 9th and 41st foot, the 26th, 42nd, and 43rd native infantry, and Captain Broadfoot's sappers and miners.

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28th of September, and on the evening of that day a reconnoissance was made. The position of the place was found extremely strong. The town, which was composed of masses of houses and forts, was built on the slope of a mountain, in the rear of which appeared yet loftier eminences, shutting in a defile leading to Toorkistan. No mode of access was discernible except by surmounting ridges of hills separated by deep ravines, or threading by narrow roads a series of gardens, vineyards, and orchards, fenced in with strong inclosure walls; the whole of which, with the mountain sides and the tops of the houses, were occupied by Jezailchees. The confidence which the enemy reposed in the strength of the place was attested by their having retained within the town the women and children of the inhabitants, as well as those of numerous refugees from Kabool.

Notwithstanding these indications of difficulty, General McCaskill ventured upon an assault, and soon after daylight broke on the morning after his arrival the troops were in motion in two columns; the right, to which was attached the mountain train, commanded by Brigadier Tulloch; the left, which was accompanied by Captain Blood's battery and the eighteen-pounders, by Brigadier Stacy. A third column, composed of a wing of her Majesty's 4th, and the cavalry under Major Lockwood, and commanded by Major Simmons, was allotted as a reserve. Captain Christie's horse protected the baggage. The columns in their

progress met with some annoyances from the Jezailchees, but these were repressed by the light troops and guns. The point selected for attack was a village called Ismallah, which Brigadier Tulloch's column assaulted on its left, while that of Brigadier Stacy, by making a long *detour*, attacked its right. The former column came into action first, but was followed after no great delay by the other. The combined attacks were marked by extraordinary steadiness as well as impetuosity, and the enemy gradually gave way, until the inclosures, forts, heights, suburbs, and town were successively won by the assailants. The reserve established itself on the lower heights, all beyond being in possession of the columns which had preceded. A vast amount of property was found in the town, and two guns were taken, one of which was immediately turned on the enemy by its captor, Lieutenant Elmhirst, of her Majesty's 9th foot. This regiment distinguished itself greatly in the assault, as did also her Majesty's 41st, the 26th, 42nd, and 43rd native infantry, and the sappers and miners. The loss sustained was not severe; one officer only was killed, Lieutenant Evans, of her Majesty's 41st. A considerable part of the town was destroyed by the captors before they quitted it.* The same fate

* Reports of great enormities perpetrated at Istalif by the British troops having been circulated, the general commanding was called upon to offer such explanation as he might be able to afford. From his statement, it appeared that for a certain period the men were allowed to appropriate such things as they might

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awaited Charekar, and was carried into effect by the same hands.*

find, in conformity with a practice which, whether justifiable or not, seems pretty well established. General McCaskill further stated, that his orders were to ruin the town, but that not more than one-third was destroyed; the attention of the engineers having been directed chiefly to the destruction of the better sort of buildings. It had been alleged, that atrocious outrages on women had been committed. General McCaskill declared that only one such instance had come to his knowledge; that the conduct of the soldiery towards women had been almost universally good; that when the troops attained the highest part of the town, large numbers of women and children were making their way up the mountain, among whom men were interspersed, who fired on the British soldiers, but that the latter abstained from returning the fire, lest they should injure the women; that at the same time many women and children were so far in the rear that they were intermingled with our foremost troops, who suffered them to proceed entirely unmolested; that about fifty women, captured in the town, were conveyed under an escort to the British camp, where they remained in safety during the night close to the tent of the chief, Jan Fishan Khan, and were next morning sent to one of his forts; that on the day of the storm the sepoys of the 26th native infantry were employed in conducting to the head-quarters of Brigadier Tulloch aged and infirm men and women, and young children, who received food and covering, and were left in safety when the troops withdrew. General McCaskill also denied that in any case Affghans had been murdered in cold blood. General Pollock gave a general denial to the charge of perpetrating excesses, made against the British troops in Affghanistan; and General Nott offered a like denial in very indignant terms.

General McCaskill seems to have satisfactorily disposed of the

* Some account of the attempt to defend Charekar, and of the ultimate escape of Major Pottinger and Lieutenant Houghten from Herat to Kabool, after being abandoned by the garrison of the former place, will be found at pp. 268, 269.

But far more gratifying than any exercise of vindictive justice, however signal and necessary, was the recovery of the prisoners, for whose safety the most serious apprehensions had long been entertained. Akbar Khan had threatened to carry them to Toorkistan, and there distribute them as slaves; a threat which the character of him by whom it was uttered rendered of very probable fulfilment. Saleh Mahomed Khan, who had charge

the charge made against the troops engaged at Istalif, and the general correctness of the statements of General Pollock and General Nott is not to be impugned. It is to be feared, however, that the excited state of the men's feelings, created by the treacheries of which their comrades had been the victims, led in some instances to individual acts which cannot be defended. The following story is related at page 176 of "A Narrative of the late victorious Campaign in Affghanistan," by Lieutenant Greenwood, of H.M.'s 31st regiment: "There is a ferocity about the Affghans which they seem to imbibe with their mothers' milk. One of the officers of the 9th regiment related to me an occurrence which took place during the action, when they forced the Khyber Pass. In storming one of the heights, a colour serjeant was killed; and from some cause or other his body was left where it fell. A soldier of the same corps happening to pass by the spot some time after, saw a Khyberee boy, apparently about six years of age, with a large knife, which his puny arm had scarcely sufficient strength to wield, engaged in an attempt to hack off the head of the dead serjeant. The young urchin was so completely absorbed in his savage task, that he heeded not the near approach of the soldier, who coolly took him up on his bayonet and threw him over the cliff." This story, professedly introduced as exhibiting an instance of "Affghan ferocity," seems quite as well calculated to illustrate European "ferocity." It is to be lamented that the execrable act of the English soldier, committed "coolly," as is justly said, should be passed by the narrator without one word of reprobation.

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of the prisoners at Bameean, had received orders to remove them to a greater distance. "All hope of deliverance," says Lieutenant Eyre, "seemed now at an end; and we endeavoured to resign ourselves to a fate that seemed inevitable. But Providence had mercifully ordained otherwise. At ten P.M.* to our unbounded astonishment, Major Pottinger† came to inform us, that Saleh Mohamed Khan had offered to make us over to the British general, on condition of our securing to him the payment of 20,000 rupees in ready cash, and 1,000 rupees per month for life." The latter sum was the amount of his pay, as commander of a regiment.‡ General Shelton and Colonel Palmer refused to become parties to this agreement, lest they should implicate themselves with Akbar Khan; but the remainder of the British officers resolved to embrace the chance presented to them, and, if treachery should be manifested, to endeavour to master the guard, and hold possession of the fort till succour should arrive. They had not, however, occasion to resort to this desperate attempt. Saleh Mohamed gave no cause for suspicion;

* On the 11th of September.

† The officer referred to is Major Eldred Pottinger, brother of Sir Henry Pottinger.

‡ Narrative, p. 368. The merit of effecting the extraordinary change in the fortune of the prisoners, and of the conversion of Saleh Mohamed Khan into a friend, is claimed by an individual named Mohun Lal, who had been moonshee to Sir Alexander Burns. Mohun Lal represents that, at much personal risk, and at the hazard of being subject to great expense, he contrived, through the agency of another native, named Syud Moortza Kashman, to assail the weak point of the officer in charge of the prisoners.

and the decisive conduct of Major Pottinger, in nominating a new governor of the province, in the name of the British government, secured the obedience of that numerous body who are always prepared to give their adhesion to the party that seems to be in the ascendant.* The Huzareh chiefs declared in favour of the British party, and the latter commenced its march unmolested. General Pollock being apprized of the turn which affairs had taken at Bameean, caused a body of 700 Kuzzulbash horse to advance towards that place, accompanied by Sir Richmond Shakespear. The zeal with which this movement was executed is proved by the fact of the force having traversed ninety miles of mountainous country in two marches. Four days after the departure of the Kuzzulbash force on this duty, General Pollock dispatched a force, under Sir Robert Sale, to occupy the Urghandee Pass. On the 17th of Sep- A. D. 184

* Lady Sale, in the following passage, bears testimony to the admirable manner in which Major Pottinger sustained the character which had so unexpectedly devolved upon him:—"It would be great injustice to Major Pottinger, not to mention the active part he took in affairs. From his perfect knowledge of the Persian language, and his acquaintance with the manners and customs of the people, he well knew how to manage them, and take advantage of the slightest opening on their part in our favour. His coolness and decision were only equalled by the promptness with which he met the wishes of the chiefs; giving them *barats* on the neighbouring lands, empowering them to receive the government rents, &c.; all which documents, though he executed them with an air of great condescension, and with the gravity of a judge, he well knew were mere pieces of waste paper; yet they had a magic charm for the time, which was all we required." —Journal, pp. 428, 429.

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tember, the emancipated prisoners were met by Sir Richmond Shakespear and the Kuzzulbashes; and on the 20th, they re-entered Sir Robert Sale's camp at Urghandee.* The illustrious veteran had arrived at that place on the preceding day; it was the anniversary of his birth, on which he numbered sixty years. Having halted for the night, he left his camp standing, and mounted to meet the returning captives, whom he had then the happiness of placing in triumph under the protection of the brave men who had been the sharers of his toils and his glory.†

* It was well that the British officers were not compelled to have recourse to force, either before quitting the fort in which they were confined, or on the road. The spirit of their followers was so entirely broken, that no reliance could be placed upon them. This lamentable state of feeling is illustrated by the following anecdote related by Lady Sale:—"Here [on the march to Killer Topchee] Saleh Mohamed Khan came up to us, and speaking in Persian to Captain Lawrence, told him that he had succeeded in getting a few muskets, which, together with ammunition, he had brought with him on a camel, and requested that he would ask the men which of them would take them, it being his wish to form a small advance-guard of Europeans as a show. Captain Lawrence then said, 'Now, my lads, here's Saleh Mohamed Khan has brought arms and ammunition for some of you; who volunteers to take muskets?' I blush to record, that a dead silence ensued. Thinking the men might be shamed into doing their duty, I said to Lawrence, 'You had better give *me* one, and I will lead the party;' but there was still no offer, and he told our general that it was useless, and he had better take them on. It is sad to think the men were so lost to all right feeling."—Journal, pp. 430, 431.

† Among those captives, it will be remembered, were the gallant officer's wife and daughter; the latter of whom he had left a happy wife, but met, alas! a widow. It would be wrong

Nothing now remained but to withdraw the army to India; and this operation was effected with little annoyance—none of sufficient importance to call for notice in this work. As the British government renounced all connection with Affghanistan, there was no motive for retaining Dost Mahomed and the other Affghan prisoners in captivity. Their intended release was accordingly announced in a government notification, couched in that grandiloquent tone which seems to have been inseparably associated

to record the meeting in any other than the simple but expressive language of Lady Sale:—"It is impossible to express our feelings on Sale's approach. To my daughter and myself, happiness, so long delayed as to be almost unexpected, was actually painful, and accompanied by a choking sensation, which could not obtain the relief of tears. When we arrived where the infantry were posted, they cheered all the captives as they passed them; and the men of the 13th [Sir Robert Sale's regiment] pressed forward to welcome us individually. Most of the men had a little word of hearty congratulation to offer, each in his own style, on the restoration of his colonel's wife and daughter; and then my highly-wrought feelings found the desired relief, and I could scarcely speak to thank the soldiers for their sympathy, whilst the long-withheld tears now found their course. On arriving at the camp, Captain Backhouse fired a royal salute from his mountain-train guns; and not only our old friends, but all the officers in the party, came to offer congratulations, and welcome our return from captivity."—Journal, pp. 436, 437.

A few of the prisoners, who had been prevented by sickness from moving with the rest to Bameean, were released by a party of Kuzzulbashes, and reached the British camp before their companions. Captain Bygrave, who remained in the hands of Akbar Khan, after the liberation of the remainder of the prisoners, was voluntarily released by the chief. General Elphinstone had died in captivity.

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with our Affghan expedition.* One act, marked by singularly bad taste, was threatened, but not performed. It was publicly intimated to be the intention of the governor-general to parade the prisoners for exhibition at a grand military show to be got up at Ferozepore. The motives which led to the abandonment of the design are not known; and in the absence of authentic information, it would be worse than useless to attempt to conjecture them. It is well that our national reputation escaped the stain which would have been incurred by a renewal of one of the most barbarous practices of bygone times, in the production of an array of captive princes to grace the triumph of conquerors. The pageant, however, took place, though the actors chiefly relied on for attraction were withdrawn. Still it seems to have been a showy spectacle; and, perhaps, the stage of Drury-lane Theatre has not often presented any thing better calculated to please the "children of a larger growth," who delight in such displays. There were painted elephants, triumphal arches, waving banners, and roaring artillery. The curtain had fallen on the tragedy, and, in accordance with theatrical usage, a

* This remark is not intended to apply to the communications of the officers engaged in the war, but to the official publications of the government, from that which announced the formation of the "Army of the Indus," to the last issued in connection with the war. Some of these writings have caused much amusement, and will certainly be read with wonder, if not with incredulity, by the men of the coming age.

splendid pantomime followed. This latter performance, it is to be presumed, afforded gratification to its contrivers; and if it effected this, its object was, without doubt, answered. And thus, with masking and mummery, terminated a war more calamitous than any which Britain had previously waged in the East—a war, the termination of which, but for the noble spirit evinced by those intrusted with high military command, would have left the name of our country a by-word of reproach; would have roused every unfriendly state to active hostility, and have placed in mortal peril, not merely the supremacy, but the very existence of British power in India.

The lesson is an awful one, and it is to be hoped that it may not be lost. We commenced a war, which indeed upon the principles of justice was not to be impugned, but which it is now obvious was utterly unwarranted by prudence. The information upon which this important step was taken was altogether unworthy of trust, and indeed intelligence got up for an occasion is seldom calculated for any thing but to mislead. The natives will furnish to order any information that is wanted, and though such Europeans as the British government mostly employs as its agents will not knowingly deceive those to whom they are responsible, they are to a great degree at the mercy of native informants, and consequently their communications are often worse than useless. It is idle to suppose that the most acute and well-prepared man can, by a residence of a few weeks or a few months in a strange

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country, acquire such a perfect acquaintance with it as would justify any government in risking much upon his report. The men of unbounded confidence and popular and plausible talent who undertake such missions, and thereby raise themselves to eminence, are the only parties who derive any real benefit from them. The very fact of their appearing in a public character is a bar to their obtaining any information worth having. Every one who has intercourse with them is on his guard, and nothing is presented to them without being coloured for the purpose. The wily government of Russia understands the business better than it yet appears to be understood elsewhere. That government has, in every place where an object of sufficient importance is in view, agents carefully selected with a view to their qualifications, but not maintaining any public character, not recognized by the government under which they dwell, and not even known by it. Far distant be the day when Britain shall imitate the aggressive and profligate policy of Russia, but we may lawfully and beneficially avail ourselves of her example to improve that much-neglected branch of our diplomatic establishments which is devoted (or should be devoted) to the collection of information. The expense would be trifling, compared with the amount of benefit; it would even be trifling in itself, for unaccredited agents require nothing for show and splendour. The advantages of such a system would not soon be apparent; we could not venture at an early period to act upon the stock of intel-

ligence thus acquired. But here again we should learn from Russia to wait till the proper time arrives for striking, and avoid the mischances which result from striking too soon.

The war with Affghanistan was commenced unadvisedly, and was throughout prosecuted without circumspection; hence the blame must rest upon the heads of the chief military authorities. Our army marched to Kabool, but military students will not derive much profit from the study of the campaign that brought it there, except it be in the way of caution against the errors committed on the route. The engineering talent displayed at Ghuznee, and the heroic bearing of those who pushed to completion the success thus begun, will shew that there was no lack of either military ability or daring courage in the army sent to re-seat Shah Shoojah on his throne; but the far-seeing sagacity which discerns every possible contingency, and the prudence which provides for the occurrence of each, appear to have been altogether wanting. Again, no sooner was Shah Shoojah acknowledged sovereign, than it was concluded that the object of the war was attained. We had enthroned that prince at Kabool, and were satisfied. It was desirable to retrench the enormous expense to which we had been subjected, and we therefore, in spite of the most unmistakeable intimations to the contrary, deluded ourselves into the belief that what we had been told of Shah Shoojah's popularity was true. Then came the fearful outbreak which seems

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to have paralyzed all but the envoy Sir William Macnaghten and a part of the military officers, unfortunately not of the highest rank, and possessing no influence save that which was derived from talents and character. The results were the destruction of the army at Kabool, and the triumph of those who were believed to be without power. All this was gloomy enough, but a yet darker cloud hung over British prospects, when it was proposed, after the rescue of the garrison of Jelalabad, to withdraw the Anglo-India troops from Affghanistan without any satisfactory vindication of the national honour. The design was frustrated, and though our countrymen cannot recur to the war in Affghanistan without sorrow, they may at least look to its conclusion without shame.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE festivities of Ferozepore closed with noise and show the chapter of British adventure in Affghanistan; but there was another country bordering the western frontier of the English possessions in India with which unadjusted differences yet existed. In regard to Sinde, the time for painted elephants and the other constituent parts of Oriental spectacle had not arrived. Diplomacy and intrigue were there actively at work. A British force was in the country, and the question of the continued existence of Sinde, as even a nominally independent state, trembled in the balance which the active commander of that force held in his grasp and directed at his will.

To understand the relations then existing between Sinde and the Anglo-Indian government, a brief retrospect will be necessary. For a considerable period preceding the year 1786, Sinde was ruled by a tribe called Kulbooras. At that period the Kulbooras, after a series of struggles extending over several years, were displaced by another tribe, the Talpoors, the chief of which was named Meer Futteh Ali. This personage assigned distinct portions of the conquered country to two of

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his relations; and thus arose the states of Khyrpoor and Meerpoor. But the larger division of territory was retained by Futteh Ali himself, in connection with his three brothers, whom, by a strange arrangement, he associated with him in the government. This chief state contained the capital of the country, Hyderabad, and from this cause was generally called by that name. The extraordinary mode of government introduced by Meer Futteh Ali continued to be maintained after his death, and was imitated at Khyrpoor, where a plurality of Ameers claimed and exercised authority, though one was recognized as chief.

The efforts of the East-India Company to prosecute their commercial pursuits in Sinde had never been very successful. The earliest attempt to establish a factory seems to have been made in the year 1758; but the establishment was withdrawn in 1775, under instructions from England. The reason for the withdrawal was not the absence of mercantile promise, but the existence of differences with the government, which led probably to the apprehension of serious danger to the factory, and those who conducted its affairs. Twenty-four years elapsed without any endeavour on the part of the East-India Company to revive their mercantile connection in Sinde; but in 1799 permission was obtained for the establishment of a factory at Tatta, and it was subsequently sought to extend the transactions of the company to Kurrachee. The Kulboora dynasty had now given way to that of Talpore; but the new

rulers were not more favourably disposed to foreign commerce than the old ones. The chief of the British establishment was peremptorily ordered to quit Kurrachee, and confine his operations to Tatta; and after a few months he and his associates were expelled from Sinde altogether. So many important affairs then, and for some time afterwards, pressed upon the attention of the Anglo-Indian government, that for some years Sinde and its jealous spirit of exclusion seem to have been little thought of. In 1809, however, a treaty, singularly brief and dry, was concluded between the British government and that country, the only noticeable article in which provided for the exclusion of the French from Sinde. In 1820, another treaty was concluded, by which all Europeans and Americans were excluded from settling in Sinde, while it was stipulated that the subjects of each of the contracting states should be allowed to reside in the dominions of the other, so long as they should conduct themselves in an orderly and peaceable manner. The Ameers also undertook to restrain all tribes and persons within their limits from making inroads upon the British dominions, or committing depredations within them. Thus matters stood, the British and Sindean governments treating each other with a cold and restrained civility, till 1832, when the opening of the Indus for the purposes of commerce became a favourite object with the Anglo-Indian government, as well as with the mercantile community at home. Through the

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agency of Colonel Pottinger* a treaty was concluded with Khyrpoor by which the use of the river and roads within the limits of that state was secured to the merchants of Hindostan, upon whatever terms might be settled with the government of Hyderabad, and a written statement of just and reasonable duties was to be furnished. A treaty, having the same object, was more reluctantly acceded to by the rulers of Hyderabad, whose jealousy was distinctly marked by the conditions which they attached to the privilege of navigating the river, and traversing the roads. They were these: first, that no military stores should be conveyed by either; secondly, that no armed vessels or boats should be used on the river; thirdly—and this restriction is the most remarkable of all, seeing that by the treaty of 1832 the subjects of the British government were entitled to remain in the dominions of the Ameers—that no English merchants should settle in Sinde, but should come as occasion might require; and "having stopped to transact their business," should return to India.† Further; merchants from British towns were to be provided with passports, the grant of which was to be duly intimated to the authorities of Hyderabad, by whom a scale of duties was to be fixed, and not departed

* Now Sir Henry Pottinger, Bart., C.B.

† The fears of the Ameers were not confined to themselves. It is said that a Syud, while gazing on the boat which, in the year preceding the treaty, conveyed Captain Burns up the Indus, exclaimed, "Alas! Sinde is now gone, since the English have seen the river."

from. A supplementary treaty, bearing date two days later than that last noticed, promised that the table of duties to be levied by the Ameers should be examined by officers of the British government, versed in affairs of traffic; and if it appeared to them too high, the government of Hyderabad, on a representation to that effect, was to reduce the duties. This was certainly one of the most extraordinary stipulations ever inserted in a commercial treaty. It virtually gave to the British government the power of fixing the duties to be levied by the government of Hyderabad on foreign goods passing through their territories. The concession of such a power evinces great confidence, or great fear; to which motive it is to be attributed is a question which it would be a waste of time to discuss. The time necessary for making the inquiries requisite to a just determination of the amount of toll to be levied seems to have been considerable; for it was not till the 23rd of December, 1834, that the scale was settled. This was effected by an additional treaty with Hyderabad, bearing date on that day.

Some time afterwards, Sinde was threatened by Runjeet Singh. The British government was not unwilling to undertake the office of a mediator between the parties; but it would seem as though something more was looked for than the preservation of peace. If this only had been the object, it might have been effected without any important change in the subsisting relations between the two

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states. A most important change was, however, contemplated by the British government, and it may best be explained in their own words:—"We considered it our duty to endeavour to induce the Maharajah to lay aside his hostile intentions. It appeared to us, also, that this opportunity ought not to be neglected, of establishing the British influence on a solid basis in Sinde, a country which is of great importance to us, both from its commanding the entrance to the Indus, and from its position in reference to the Punjab and Affghanistan. With these views, we, on the one hand, instructed Captain Wade to endeavour, by any means short of actual menace, to deter the Maharajah from advancing against Shikarpore, while, on the other, we desired Colonel Pottinger to intimate to the Ameers that we were ready to enter into a closer alliance with them on such terms as might be mutually agreed on. Owing to the distance of the scene, and the uncertainty of events, we did not consider it expedient to prescribe to Colonel Pottinger the precise conditions on which he was to treat. He was authorized by us to offer our protection against the Sikhs, and we expressed our hope that, with a view to enable us to fulfil this obligation, the Ameers would consent permanently to receive, and to pay the expense of, a body of British troops, to be stationed at their capital. Short of this, we informed him, that he was at liberty to offer the mediation of the British government with Maharajah Runjeet Singh, on condition of the recep-

tion of a British agent at Hyderabad, and, of course, of all the relations between Sinde and Lahore being conducted solely through the medium of British officers, and of the expense of any temporary deputation of the British troops into Sinde, which might be found requisite, being defrayed by the Ameers."* The state of affairs was not ripe for the former of these plans; but one feature of the latter was introduced in a treaty concluded by Colonel Pottinger in April, 1838, by which the British government engaged to interpose its good offices to adjust the differences between the Ameers and their powerful neighbour; and the Ameers agreed to the permanent residence of an accredited British minister at the court of Hyderabad, with the power of changing his ordinary place of abode, and the right of being attended by such an escort as might by his own government be deemed suitable. The reception of a permanent British agent was very distasteful to the government of Hyderabad; but Colonel Pottinger was instructed to state, that unless this point were conceded, the interposition of the British government with Runjeet Singh could not be affirmed. The presence of a British agent was probably necessary to the preservation of the unmolested right of navigating the Indus, which

* Letter from governor-general in council to secret committee, 28th of November, 1836.—Sinde Papers, printed by order of General Court of Proprietors of East-India Stock, 17th of November, 1843, pp. 5 and 6.

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had been assented to by the Ameers some years before; and had the demands of the government of British India been restricted to this, they would scarcely have been accused of asking too much for their services in preserving Sinde from an unequal contest with the ambitious and powerful ruler of the Punjab. Disinterested friendship between nations is not to be expected; and when it is professed, the profession is an emanation of pure hypocrisy. But the further views which were entertained, and in all likelihood never lost sight of, cannot be approved. The desire to reduce Sinde to the condition of a subsidiary state ought to have found no place in British counsels. The Sindean governments had always been cold and unfriendly, but never hostile. They wished to keep aloof from British connection, but they had never afforded ground for anxiety or alarm.

About two months after the ratification of the new treaty between the British government and Sinde, the position of those two powers was embarrassed by the conclusion of the tripartite treaty, to which the British government, Runjeet Singh, and Shoojah-ool-Moolk, were the parties. Sinde had formerly been a dependency of Kabool—that is, its rulers had paid tribute to the sovereign of Kabool whenever the latter was strong enough to enforce payment. But the low state of the Affghan power had for many years rendered this impracticable, and consequently nothing had been paid.

By the tripartite treaty, Shah Shoojah renounced all claim to further payment, and consented to receive, in consequence of the arrears, such a sum as might be determined by the British government. On this arrangement the Ameers had never been consulted, and consequently its effect was to transfer to another an undefined portion of their wealth without their own consent. They had, without doubt, never intended to pay any thing, and it is quite certain that, without the aid of their British ally, Shah Shoojah could never have compelled them to make payment of the fraction of a rupee. The British government had proffered its services to arrange the differences of the Ameers with Runjeet Singh, and they had been accepted; this government now undertook, without reference to one of the powers interested, to determine how much of an outstanding claim should be paid and how much remitted. Shah Shoojah consented to be bound by their award, for on that rested his only hope of getting any thing; but that the Ameers should be equally ready to submit to an authority founded, with regard to them, upon pure assumption, and which was created for the very purpose of levying a contribution upon them, could not reasonably be expected. But the case was embarrassed by a release from Shah Shoojah which the Ameers produced. By this document the former renounced all claims or pretensions upon Sinde or Shikarpore, and engaged that none should ever be made. With reference to the release, the resident might well observe, "how this is to be

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got over I do not myself see."* The authority which the resident represented took a different view, and he was apprized of that view in the following terms: "The governor-general is of opinion that it is not incumbent on the British government to enter into any formal investigation of the plea adduced by the Ameers;" † though it was added that the arbitration of the question might possibly be left, by mutual consent, to the British envoy at the court of Shah Shoojah. The position that the British government was not bound to investigate the subject was certainly most extraordinary. A party claims from another a large sum—a third party, without consulting the reputed debtor, undertakes to compromise the matter, and to determine how much shall be paid—the alleged debtor denies that any thing is due, and produces a release from the creditor—the arbitrator, thereupon, declares that it is not incumbent on him to inquire into the plea. Would such a course be considered just in any private transaction? And if not, can it be reconciled with any honest principles of public morality? The truth is, that money was wanted; the Ameers were looked to for a supply, and it was inconvenient to enter upon any inquiry as to whether they could justly be required to furnish it or not. Further, the pecuniary demand was not all.

* Letter to secretary with governor-general, October 25, 1838. —Sinde Papers, p. 80.

† Letter from secretary with governor-general to resident in Sinde, November 19, 1838.—Sinde Papers, p. 117.

The suspicion entertained by the Ameers of the designs of the British government was well known, and that suspicion was now to be increased by the requisition of a passage through their country for a part of the forces proceeding to the invasion of Affghanistan. It was expressly provided in the treaty of 1832, that no military stores should be transmitted by the river or roads of Sinde, but this promise was now to be set aside by one of the parties to the treaty without the consent, and even against the strongest wishes, of the other. In these arrangements for giving away a large sum at the expense of the Ameers, and making use of their country for military purposes, without reference to their views or desires, it is obvious that they were not treated either as friends or independent princes. The object for which the territories of the Ameers were to be traversed by foreign armies, moreover, was one in which it would be too little to say they had no interest. They had a direct interest in counteracting it. Those armies were to reseat Shah Shoojah on the throne of Affghanistan, and the Ameers were to pay part of the expense. They were not such zealous moralists, nor such devotees to the cause of legitimacy, as to reconcile themselves to the sacrifice required, by reflecting that it was to be made for the purpose of dispossessing usurpers. They would have been well content that the usurpers should remain in power, and their own treasury be spared.

It happened most opportunely that about this time one of the Ameers was detected in carrying

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on a correspondence with Persia. This undoubtedly indicated an unfriendly spirit towards the British government, but with reference to its own proceedings that government could scarcely deem itself aggrieved. The discovery, however, was employed in aid of the designs already in progress, and great indignation was expressed at the "duplicity" of the Ameer, "in maintaining, at the same moment, professions of submission to Persia and of close alliance with the British government." That "close alliance," it should here be remembered, had never been sought by the Ameers—it had been forced upon them—and an alliance which was to allow the stronger party to dispose of the treasures and occupy the territory of the weaker at pleasure could not be regarded by the latter with much gratification.

The summary and determined manner in which the British government was prepared to treat the insubordination complained of will best be illustrated by a few extracts from the instructions furnished to its agent for his guidance in dealing with the refractory party. "It seems open to you to decide upon proclaiming, as soon as a force from Bombay may enable you to do so with effect, that an act of hostility and bad faith having been committed toward the British government, the share in the government of Sinde which has been held by the guilty party shall be transferred to the more faithful members of the family; and it may be thought right to accompany this transfer with a condition, that, as a security for the future, a British subsidiary force

shall be maintained in Sinde; or, secondly, the maintenance of this force may be required without the adoption of an act so rigorous as that of deposition; or, thirdly, it may be thought expedient, upon submission, and the tender by the Ameer of such amends as may be in his power, to point out to him that no better reparation can be given than by exertions to give effect to the treaty formed for the restoration of Shah Shoojah, by a cordial adoption of its terms, and by exertions on every side to facilitate the success of the coming expedition, the party or parties to the breach of faith now commented upon being required to contribute much more largely than the other Ameer or Ameers, to the pecuniary composition to be paid to Shah Shoojah-ool-Moolk. The course first named is, in the opinion of his lordship, clearly justified by the circumstances of the case: it would alone give security for the future: and every other course would seem to put the friends and the unfriendly, the faithful and the faithless, on the same footing."*

These instructions it was easy to enunciate; to carry them out in any way was a matter of difficulty. With this difficulty the resident had to grapple, as well as with others connected with the arrival of the Bombay force, destined for the invasion of Affghanistan. The Ameers were expected to afford facilities for obtaining supplies—they afforded none, but, on the contrary (those of Hyderabad at least), were not unnaturally anxious to throw every possible impedi-

* Letter from secretary with governor-general to resident in Sinde, September 6, 1838.—Sinde Papers, p. 49.

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ment in the way of procuring them. Through the exertions of various officers, the force, however, was provided with the means of advancing; and it gradually approached the capital of Lower Sinde.

The resident had deferred making to the Ameers a definite communication of the views of the British government as to their future position till this period, and as a diplomatist he acted rightly. The Ameers were intensely averse to even the passage of troops through their territories; the notion of a British force permanently occuping any part of those territories had never entered their minds.* The time at length arrived for suggesting it, and the draft of a treaty was submitted to them, the second article of which declared that the governor-general of India had commanded that a British force should be kept in Sinde, to be stationed at Tatta, where a

* This appears from the communications of Colonel Pottinger to his government. "I now beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 19th ultimo; and, after most attentively studying the instructions conveyed by it, I am obliged candidly to confess, that I feel myself placed in a situation in which I can indulge no hope of carrying the governor-general's commands into effect on the principle prescribed. My despatches, subsequent to that of the 2nd of November, will have shewn the abject state to which Noor Mahomed Khan has been reduced, by my refusal to treat with him relative to the money payment to Shah Shoojah-ool-Moolk; but even when labouring under his worst apprehensions, it will be observed that no such idea has apparently ever crossed his mind, as that our ultimate plan was to station even a company of sepoys in Sinde; and the moment that intention is announced, I think it will be the signal for a cordial coalition to oppose our arrangements."—Letter, December 15th, 1838. Sinde Papers, page 133.

cantonment was to be formed, and that the strength of this force was to depend on the pleasure of the said governor-general. Thus in the outset it was assumed that the rulers of Sinde were dependent upon the government of British India, for the stationing of a military force at Tatta, and the determining the amount of the force, were not made subjects of mutual contract; the first point was rested on the governor-general's command, and the second was left to his pleasure. By the next succeeding article it was provided, that the Ameers should pay a sum (left open in the draft) "in part of the expense of the force, from the presence of which they will derive such vast advantages." Such was the language employed; the chief advantage, as far as can be discerned, being the exchange of sovereignty for dependence.

The draft treaty was laid before the Ameers, and Lieutenant Eastwick, with some other British officers, were admitted to an audience, for the purpose of discussing and explaining this extraordinary document. On this occasion, Noor Mahomed took from a box all the treaties that had formerly been entered into with the British government, and significantly asked, "What is to become of all these?" The question was not an inappropriate one, and it was followed by some observations not unfaithfully describing the progress of the intercourse between Sinde and the British government. The Ameer said, "Here is another annoyance. Since the day that Sinde has been con-

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nected with the English, there has always been something new; your government is never satisfied; we are anxious for your friendship, but we cannot be continually persecuted. We have given a road to your troops through our territories, and now you wish to remain."*

It would be useless to pursue the history of this period minutely. The Ameers of Hyderabad were well disposed to resist, and the Beloochee population not less ready to support their resistance. The British mission returned from the capital to the British camp, danger being apprehended from a continued stay at the former place. But difficulties, discouragements, and circumstances of embarrassment congregated thick and fast round the Ameers. The army of Sir John Keane was marching onward to Hyderabad; the reserve was in possession of Kurrachee. Sir Alexander Burns had concluded a treaty with the Ameers of Khyrpore, by which possession of Bukkur had been obtained; and Sir Willoughby Cotton, with the force under his command, was approaching from that quarter. In this situation the Ameers had no choice, but, in their own language, to become our "humblest slaves," and the offensive treaty was accepted; the sum to be paid for the subsidiary force being fixed at three lacs. But this treaty was not entirely approved by the government of British India. Three of the articles which related to the use of Kurrachee as a port during the months when other modes

* Sinde Papers, p. 164.

of communicating between Bombay and Sinde were not available, were struck out, inasmuch as the English were in possession of that place, and their government meant to keep it. In the second article, as accepted by the Ameers, the exercise of the "pleasure" of the governor-general, as to the force to be maintained in Sinde, had been restricted to the employment of five thousand men. This was qualified so as to declare no more than that "it was not intended" that the force should exceed five thousand fighting men, thus virtually restoring the article to its original state. By another modification, the power of the British government was almost indefinitely extended as to the choice of the locality in which this force should be stationed. Instead of being fixed absolutely at Tatta, it was to be either there, or at "such other place westward of the river Indus" as the governor-general might select. There were other alterations, the most important of which was the omission of an article restraining the British government from forming any treaty or engagement which could possibly affect the interests of Sinde, without the knowledge and concurrence of the Ameers. The remainder it will not be requisite to notice. The result of the changes may readily be anticipated; the Ameers objected, implored, and finally gave way, by affixing their seals to the revised documents.

Thus, in a very brief period, was Sinde reduced from a state of perfect independence to that of a feudatory of the British government. The modern

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history of India affords many instances of similar changes, but few, if indeed any, in which the incorporation has been effected so entirely without fair pretence. The Ameers of Sinde wished no alliance or connection with us; they owed us nothing, and they had inflicted on us no injury; but it suited our policy to reduce them to vassalage, and they were thus reduced. If it be argued that we could not have prosecuted our views in Affghanistan without securing the dominion of Sinde, it must be answered, that if such were the case, they ought to have been abandoned. We had an object, and a legitimate one, to accomplish in Affghanistan, and as far as the rulers of that country, and those who claimed to rule it, were concerned, the prosecution of our policy did not violate the laws of justice; but if it could not be pursued without invading the rights of others, there ought to have been an end to all attempts for carrying it out. It might be, and without doubt it was, very convenient to pass through Sinde; but we might have confined the passage of our army to Upper Sinde, where the reluctance to grant the favour seems to have been less strong, or we might have entered Affghanistan without passing through Sinde at all. With Runjeet Singh we had a long-established alliance. Why should so old a friend distrust us? if he did, how could we expect to find greater favour from those who had always looked coldly upon us? and, finally, if both authorities refused us that which we wanted, upon what principle did we select Sinde

for coercion? The principle was this—we could not safely quarrel with Runjeet Singh, but we entertained little apprehension of danger from the enmity of the Ameers of Sinde.

When Lord Auckland retired from the government of British India, the subsidiary treaty was that which regulated the relations of that government with Sinde. Little of importance had occurred since its ratification, except the death of Noor Mahomed, the chief of the college of Ameers at Hyderabad, and some negotiations for transferring to the British the management of Shikarpore, which were never concluded. It was alleged that the Ameers had been engaged with various parties in correspondence of a tendency opposed to British interests. The charge is not improbable, and may have been true; but it is remarkable that the terrible reverses which our army sustained in Affghanistan, and the consequent diminution of our military reputation, did not tempt the Ameers, writhing as they were under a deep sense of wrong, into any overt act of hostility. Indeed, the man likely to be best informed on the subject, Colonel Outram, political agent in Sinde, declared that "nothing very definite had been resolved on," and expressed an opinion that "such changeable, puerile, and divided chieftains" were not "ever likely to enter into deep, and consequently dangerous, conspiracy," nor did he "consider that any thing of the sort would be persevered in so long as no further disasters befell our arms in Affghanistan." This was

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written on the last day of May, 1842, when our prospects in Affghanistan were brightening.

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Early in the year 1842, Lord Ellenborough, as already mentioned, arrived in India as the successor of Lord Auckland. In May, from what especial cause does not appear, his lordship transmitted to Colonel Outram letters addressed to the three divisions of the Ameers, threatening them with the confiscation of their dominions in the event of their proving faithless to the British government. The agent was allowed a discretion as to the delivery of these letters, and in the exercise of that discretion he withheld them.

The governor-general was prepared to dispossess the Ameers of their territories; but on the supposition that no sufficient, or ostensibly sufficient, cause might be afforded for this step, he meditated an important change in their situation, in regard to the British government. This was the commutation of the tribute payable by the Ameers to that government, by the transfer of territory; and the localities, where cessions of territory were to be derived, were specified. Colonel Outram submitted to the governor-general the sketch of a supplemental treaty, embodying these views; but for some reason not explainable, his lordship deemed it not advisable to press negotiations on the Ameers "precipitately," and determined "to leave their minds for the present in tranquillity."*

* Letter to political agent in Sinde, 10th of April, 1842.—Sinde Papers, p. 380.

The "tranquillity" conceded was not of long duration. In the month following that in which expression had been given to the wish that the Ameers should enjoy this inestimable boon of tranquillity, Major-General Sir Charles Napier was ordered to proceed to Sinde, to assume the chief military command there. This was not all; he was also to exercise the chief political and civil authority. Such an arrangement, under peculiar circumstances, may be sometimes beneficial. The present instance is pronounced by a writer hostile to Lord Auckland, and generally favourable to Lord Ellenborough, to have been "a step, at such a crisis, of very questionable policy."*

Sir Charles Napier, in accordance with the instructions of the governor-general, proceeded to Sinde, and on the 5th of October, reported that the Ameers levied tolls on the river, contrary to the treaty. Without waiting for the result of the remonstrance which the British representative made on the subject, that functionary was, by instructions forwarded in answer to his communication, directed to intimate to the Ameers, that he was authorized to treat for a revision of the treaty. The agent to whom these instructions were addressed was nothing loth to follow them; and in a paper of extraordinary length, he recorded his conviction that the existing state of political relations between Sinde and the British government could not last—"That the more

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* "A Great Country's Little Wars," by Henry Lushington, p. 221.

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powerful government would, at no very distant period, swallow up the weaker;" and that "it would be better to come to the results" at once, "if it could be done with honesty." The difficulty of doing it "with honesty" was great; but Sir Charles Napier was not a man to despair. An array of charges against the Ameers, extending over a considerable period, was transmitted to the governor-general, and was answered by the draft of a treaty to be presented for the acceptance of the alleged offenders. By this document, required to carry into effect the project of obtaining territory in place of tribute, certain places were pointed out as centres, to which a convenient *arrondissement* of country was to be assigned at the pleasure of the British general, and political representative of his government. Another portion of territory was to be taken to reward the fidelity of the Khan of Bhawlpore as a British ally. The Ameers were to provide fuel for the steamers navigating the Indus, and if they failed, the servants of the British government were to be entitled to fell wood within a hundred yards of the banks of the river, within the territories of the Ameers. This was an offensive privilege, but not the most offensive that was claimed. By a series of articles in the treaty, which would seem to have been framed purposely with a view to insult, the Ameers were to cease to exercise the privilege of coining, one of the chief characteristics of sovereignty. The British government were to coin for them; and, to aggravate the indignity offered to

these wretched princes, the coin was to bear on one side "the effigy of the sovereign of England." Thus every transaction at every bazaar throughout Sinde was to be made the means of publicly proclaiming that the Ameers had ceased to rule; that they had become dependants of a foreign potentate, and held so much of authority as was allowed to remain with them only by the sufferance of a superior, or of the servants of that superior. Separate treaties were to be tendered to the governments of Hyderabad, and to those of Khyrpore, but they were framed upon the same principles, and directed to the same ends.

The justice of imposing such severe terms was rested upon the authenticity of the letters said to have been written respectively by Meer Nusseer Khan, of Hyderabad, and Meer Roostum Khan, of Khyrpore, and on the escape of an insurgent leader from the British authorities through the agency of a servant of the latter prince. As to the letters, every one acquainted with Oriental affairs knows that correspondence is constantly fabricated to aid any purpose that may be in hand. It is not meant that any Englishman was connected with the fabrication in this case, supposing the process to have been resorted to, or had any acquaintance with the matter. The supposition is unnecessary; native adventurers have great tact in guessing what will be useful or acceptable to those above them, and a rare facility in counterfeiting both signatures and seals. The authenticity of the letters was denied by

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the alleged writers; the denial is certainly not to be received as conclusive against belief in their authenticity, but such belief is not warranted by any sufficient evidence. The seal attached to the letter professed to be from Meer Nusseer Khan differed from the ordinary seal of that prince, but was said to correspond with another seal which he was represented to possess. The authenticity of the letter, however, was doubted by at least one very competent judge.* The letter of Meer Roostum Khan, according to the admission of those who brought it forward in accusation against him, could not be traced to his cognizance; it was believed to have been written by his minister, but whether with or without his knowledge was not shewn; and the escape of the prisoner from British custody was in like manner traceable no further than to the agent by whom it was effected. Certainly the rights of princes were never assailed on such slender ground as these charges afforded. But it was enough: for reasons not then disclosed, it was resolved to go forward with the process which had been commenced under a different administration, to tighten the grasp of the British government upon Sinde, and thus to accelerate the progress of the movement which was to convert that country into a British province in name as well as in fact.

The treaties were presented for the acceptance of the Ameers both of Upper and Lower Sinde, on A. D. 1842. the 6th of December. They were accompanied by

* Mr. Clerk, envoy at Lahore.

letters from Sir Charles Napier, intimating his intention to take immediate possession of the districts which it was proposed to assign to the Khan of Bhawlpore. The letters were dated the 1st of the month; and on the 18th publicity was given to the intention by the issue of a proclamation, signed by the British general, which, after reciting the orders under which he acted, and the purpose which he had in view, declared that if the Ameers should, after the commencement of the ensuing year, collect any revenue in advance, or impose any new tax within the districts which they were destined to lose, they should be punished by amercement. At this time the new treaties were matters for discussion —they had not been ratified—they were mere proposals from one party, which the opposite parties might reject; subject, of course, to the penalty attached to rejection. But it cannot fail to be observed, that Sinde is dealt with by Sir Charles Napier as though the right of the governor-general of British India to parcel it out at his pleasure were unquestioned and unquestionable; and, moreover, as if it were desired to exercise this right in a manner as offensive as possible to those who were to suffer privation from the exercise. The direct tendency of the proclamation was to render the Ameers contemptible in the eyes of those whom they were yet, perhaps, for a time to be permitted to regard as subjects. Such a course could not facilitate the acceptance of the proffered treaties; it was directly calculated to influence hostile feel-

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ings already believed to prevail in their minds; and had it been determined to hurry on an appeal to the sword, no more likely means could have been devised than the issue of this most injudicious and insulting proclamation.

The extraordinary constitution of the Sinde government has already been adverted to. An incident, arising from this cause, has now to be noticed. Meer Roostum was the chief of the Ameers of Khyrpore. He was above eighty years of age, and consequently no long tenure of life and power (such power as he was likely to retain) could be anticipated for him. According to the constitution of the Sinde state (if constitution it had), Ali Moorad, brother of Meer Roostum, was the legitimate successor of the prince in the chieftainship. Meer Roostum, it was alleged, wished to divert the succession in favour of his own son; and Ali Moorad applied to Sir Charles Napier for support against any such attempt, should it be made. It was promised, on condition of the fidelity of Ali Moorad to the British cause. But something further was wished. The unmanageableness of a government constituted like that of Sinde was obvious enough; and it occurred to Sir Charles Napier that the age of Meer Roostum, and a presumed indisposition on his part to be longer burthened with the toils and vexations of government, might afford means for effecting some modification favourable to British influence. The following statement rests upon the authority of Sir Charles Napier, but it is proper to observe in the outset

that it is not in all points uncontroverted. Meer Roostum sent a secret communication to Sir Charles Napier to the effect that he could do nothing, and would make his escape to the British general's camp. This step was not desired; it was regarded as inconvenient, and by a very adroit, if not a very straightforward, piece of diplomacy, the general was relieved alike from the embarrassment which would have resulted from entertaining Meer Roostum in his camp, and from that which would have followed his refusing him this refuge. As the transaction was in many points extraordinary, it will be best to relate it, as far as possible, in the words of the chief actor, Sir Charles Napier himself. It appeared, then, to him that the only desirable system to follow in Sinde was that of "making the chief powerful, and holding him under the power of the government," the British government being meant. "This," writes Sir Charles Napier, addressing the governor-general, "made me promise Ali Moorad your lordship's support in having the turban,* which your lordship has approved of. The next step was to secure him the exercise of its power now, even during his brother's life. This I was so fortunate to succeed in, by persuading Meer Roostum to place himself in Ali Moorad's hands."† Meer Roostum, accord-

* The word turban, it will be perceived, is here used in the same sense as the word crown is frequently employed to indicate the sovereignty.

† Letter to governor-general, 27th of December, 1842.—Sinde Papers, p. 515.

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ingly, instead of proceeding to the British camp, threw himself upon his brother, and surrendered to him the chief authority. He seems, however, soon to have repented of the steps which he had taken, for in a very few days he escaped from the care of the person to whom he had been commended by the British general.*

The flight of Meer Roostum—his first flight, namely, that which was followed by the surrender of his power to Ali Moorad—excited great consternation among his family and followers. They forthwith fled, but not to the British camp nor to Ali Moorad. Their choice was the desert, and the greater portion were reported to have sought safety in a fort called Emaun Ghur. Thither Sir Charles Napier resolved to follow them, and commenced his march without delay. No certain intelligence as to a supply of water being attainable, it was deemed

* That the intrigues of Oriental princes should be inexplicable is nothing new. Unfortunately in this instance the conduct of the British general is inexplicable also, and his statements irreconcilable until he shall furnish some further explanation. An account given by him has been closely followed in the narrative which will be found in the text; but it ought not to be concealed that the letters of the gallant general, written at different periods, contained discrepancies amounting to positive contradictions. The account followed above was written only eight days after the transactions recorded, and coincides with another more brief, which bears date on the day after Meer Roostum sought shelter with his brother. Any reader disposed to exercise his ingenuity in unravelling the perplexities and reconciling the discordance of this strange affair, all resting on the authority of Sir Charles Napier, will find abundant opportunity in the papers on the subject. Some notice of them will be found hereafter.

prudent to take forward only a very small force. It consisted of three hundred and fifty men of the Queen's 22nd, mounted on camels (two on each animal), two hundred Sindean horse, and two 24-pounder howitzers. The want of forage rendered it necessary to send back a hundred and fifty of the horse. The remainder of the force encountered the difficulties of the desert march, which were great, and reached Emaun Ghur, which place was occupied without difficulty, and destroyed. The fort was stated to belong to Ali Moorad, who consented to its destruction. The march of the British general, and the capture and destruction of a fortress belonging to some or other of the authorities of Sinde, took place at a time when we were professedly in a state of peace with all. It is greatly, therefore, to be desired, for the credit of the British name, that the statement above noticed should be correct. It has, however, been disputed, and with some appearance of truth. The fall of Emaun Ghur took place early in the month of January, 1843. A. D. 184

The event was not without effect; but the Ameers were yet naturally anxious to put off the evil day, which was to divest them almost of the very semblance of sovereignty. Major Outram, whose powers had been withdrawn, and who had, consequently, retired to Bombay, it was thought might, by his personal influence, be able to effect something in the way of diminishing the reluctance of the princes to sign the sentence of their own virtual deposition. He returned, held various con-

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ferences with the Ameers, and finally prevailed on them personally to affix their seals to the treaties.* But there were other parties who claimed the privilege of judging beside the Ameers. The Beloochee tribes—bold, fierce, and intractable—were greatly excited against the European intruders, who, by no slow advances, were establishing their own authority supreme in Sinde. As the British commissioner and his attendants departed from the final conference, they were assailed with execrations from an assembled crowd, who were restrained from more dangerous expression of their feelings only by the presence of a strong escort of horse, sent by the Ameers, under the command of some of their most influential chiefs.

One great point on which the Ameers had dwelt in their conferences with Major Outram, was the wrong which the British authorities had caused, and continued to uphold, in the transfer of authority from Meer Roostum to Ali Moorad. It was stated, that the surrender of power by the latter had been the effect of compulsion; and seeing that the aged chieftain was altogether in the hands of his brother, it is very probable such was the fact. The political move, which the British general thought a masterstroke of diplomacy, thus became a chief cause of embarrassing the negotiation, while it placed a chief, venerable for his years at least, in the position

* With the exception of one of the Ameers of Khyrpore, who alleged that his seal was in the possession of his brother, and promised to ratify the treaty at a future time.

of an oppressed and injured man, and left on the shoulders of the highest British authority in Sinde the charge of being the principal author of the chieftain's degradation.*

It was constantly represented by the Ameers, that the continued advance of Sir Charles Napier

* The embarrassing situation in which Sir Charles Napier placed himself by his proceedings in regard to Meer Roostum and Ali Moorad was obviously felt by him very deeply, as may be seen by a collation of his statements on the subject in the Sinde Papers and the supplementary collection.

The first notice of the affair to be found in the printed papers occurs in a letter from Sir Charles Napier to the governor-general, dated Sukkur, December 20th, 1842, which commences thus :— "I had a secret message from Meer Roostum. The bearer had an open letter in the usual unmeaning style of the Durbar; but the messenger privately informed Lieutenant Brown, that Roostum could do nothing, and would escape to my camp. I did not like this, as it would have embarrassed me very much how to act; but the idea struck me at once that he might go to Ali Moorad, who might induce him (as a family arrangement) to resign the turban to him (Ali Moorad), especially as Roostum has long been desirous of getting rid of this charge of the Talpoors. I therefore secretly wrote to Roostum and Ali Moorad, and about one o'clock this morning I had an express from Ali Moorad, to say that his brother is safe with him, and that he requested me not to move upon Khyrpore before twelve o'clock to-day, to give time for his women to get away in safety. This I promised, and the more readily, as I could not (from other circumstances) move before to-morrow. Ali Moorad is now virtually chief; for, if Meer Roostum does not bestow the turban upon him, he will, at all events, be guided by Ali, into whose hands he has voluntarily thrown himself. Ali Moorad was more powerful than any of the Talpoors, even when Meer Roostum's name and power were against him; now he is irresistible, and in alliance with us besides." After a few further observations, Sir Charles Napier briefly sums up the results of the course which he had followed; and at the head of the summary stand the three points following:

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would exasperate the Beloochees, and cause them to resort to arms in defence of the independence of

—"First: that Ali Moorad, the most powerful of the Talpoor family, is secured to our interest by the promise of the turban. Second: that the chief of the Talpoors, frightened at the violence of his family, and at our steady operations to coerce them, has thrown himself into his brother's power by my advice, otherwise I should believe some trick was intended. Third: that we, having complete power over the brother, have power over all, without any 'chief-making,' or any apparent interference, or any disturbance of the natural order of succession."

In another letter to the governor-general, dated 27th of December, Sir Charles Napier, after adverting to the duplicity of the Ameers, says, "This conviction opened upon me a system which appears the only one to follow,—making the chief powerful, and holding him under the power of the government. This made me venture to promise Ali Moorad your lordship's support in having the turban, which your lordship has approved of. The next step was to secure him the exercise of its power now, even during his brother's life. This I was so fortunate to succeed in, by persuading Meer Roostum to place himself in Ali Moorad's hands. This burst upon his family and followers like a bomb-shell." In a letter of still later date (29th December), also addressed to the governor-general, Sir Charles Napier, who had then become acquainted with Meer Roostum's flight from his brother, thus writes:—"Meer Roostum had resigned the turban to his brother Ali in the most formal manner, writing his resignation in the Koran before all the religious men collected to witness the resignation at Dejee. Ali sent the Koran to me to see it. I said that these family arrangements were their own, but that your lordship would support the head of their family, whoever it might be, according to the spirit of the treaty; that I personally thought it better for Roostum to keep the turban, and let Ali Moorad act for him, but that he was free to do as he pleased; it was a family arrangement, with which your lordship would not interfere."

This much is to be gathered from the first published collection of papers relating to Sinde, and the amount may be stated as follows:—that Meer Roostum proposed to escape to the British camp, that Sir Charles Napier was desirous of averting such a

their country. That officer, however, continued to advance, and on the 15th of February the long-

movement, and suggested that the old chief should take refuge with his brother, Ali Moorad; that in making this suggestion he was actuated by a wish to place Ali Moorad, at all events, in possession of the actual power attached to what is called the turban, and, if it could be accomplished, in possession of the turban itself. He abstained from suggesting the transfer, but thought it might be effected by a "family arrangement." Meer Roostum acted on the British general's advice, proceeded to join his brother, and by his own free consent, or as the result of compulsion, made the surrender of the turban, as Sir Charles Napier had desired.

The supplementary collection of papers contains the following letter from Sir Charles Napier to Meer Roostum, which it is to be presumed is the letter written in answer to the alleged communication from the chief to the British general offering to come to his camp. "My own belief is, that, personally, you have ever been the friend of the English. But you are helpless among your ill-judging family. I send this by your brother, his Highness Ali Moorad; listen to his advice; trust yourself to his care; you are too old for war; and, if battle begin, how can I protect you? If you go with your brother, you may either remain with him, or I will send an escort for you to bring you to my camp, where you will be safe. Follow my advice, it is that of a friend; why should I be your enemy? If I was, why should I take this trouble to save you? I think you will believe me, but do as you please." This letter, it will be observed, does indeed give the person to whom it is addressed the option of coming to the British camp—after he had surrendered himself to his brother and successor, Ali Moorad, not at once and immediately; and Sir Charles Napier, in his correspondence with the governor-general, declared that the presence of the Ameer in his camp would embarrass him.

In a paper drawn up by Sir Charles Napier at a later period, and which will be found in the supplementary collection, pp. 112—115, as an inclosure in a letter to the governor-general, dated 10th of August, 1843, numbered 155, the writer, after adverting to some conversations with Ali Moorad, thus continues: "Soon after, a message arriving from Meer Roostum, claiming my pro-

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threatened outbreak took place; the first object of attack being the residence of the British com-

tection against the intrigues of his own family, offered an opportunity of having one man to deal with instead of a faction, with whom it was impossible for a civilized government to deal, and into whose intrigues I considered it undignified for a powerful government to enter, and from the first I determined not to enter into them. I was determined that when there was a breach of treaty, whether great or small, I would hold all the Ameers responsible, and would not be played off like a shuttlecock, and told, this was done by one Ameer, and that by another, and have a week's inquiry to find out whom I was to hold responsible for aggression; for I at once saw, on arriving in Sinde, that this hide-and-seek shifting responsibility was the game which the Ameers had been playing. The proposal of Meer Roostum to come into my camp offered me an easy remedy for this evil; and, having adopted the high opinion which Major Outram entertained of Ali Moorad, I had no hesitation in recommending his brother to seek his protection, and be advised by him; but I beg the reader to bear in mind—for it is a matter of first-rate importance, and one upon which the whole gist of the matter depends—that, while advising Meer Roostum to be guided by his brother, yet having suspicions, in despite of the high character given to me by Major Outram of that brother, that some intrigue must be going on, I gave Meer Roostum the option and invitation of coming to my camp, and putting himself under my protection. I repeat the word 'must,' because it is utterly impossible for me to believe that any Eastern Divan can act without intrigue. By my advice to Meer Roostum, which, let the reader observe, was not given till it was asked, I secured to Meer Roostum the honourable and powerful protection of the British government. This he did not choose to accept; he went to his brother, and then he fled from that brother with his usual vacillating imbecility."

All this is reconcilable with what has been already quoted, but there is a colouring given to the transactions described which in strict truth they will not bear. Meer Roostum denied that he had ever sent the message upon which Sir Charles Napier's interference with his movements was based; and the fact of his having sent it rests solely on the assertion of the moonshee by whom

missioner, Colonel Outram. A dense body of cavalry and infantry took post in a manner to command the message, real or pretended, was delivered. But, presuming the message to be genuine (and upon this presumption Sir Charles Napier, throughout the papers, grounds his right to advise), it follows that Meer Roostum desired to place himself in the hands of the British general, but the latter did not wish to have him. He advised the aged chieftain to go to his brother, and with reference to this advice, and the manner in which it was given, it is not a fair statement to say that Meer Roostum "did not choose to accept" the protection of the British government. He did choose to accept it (supposing the message to have been sent), for he had applied for it; but he was recommended to take another course, which suited Sir Charles Napier better. Let Sir Charles Napier speak for himself. In a letter to Meer Roostum, dated January the 2nd, 1843 (in supplementary collection, p. 7, No. 17), he says: "You know that you offered to come to my camp, and that I advised you to go to your brother's fortress instead of coming to my camp."

But a more extraordinary passage occurs in a later part of the paper, No. 155 in the supplementary collection; it follows: "Another thing I have to observe—it is, that when I heard that he had resigned the turban to Ali Moorad, I disapproved of it; and Mr. Brown will recollect my sending Ali Moorad's vakeel back to him with this message. I even recommended him to return the turban, and merely act as his brother's lieutenant. His answer was, that the deed had been executed in due form before all the moollahs or priests, and that it was impossible to alter it. I, of course, had nothing to say; I had no business to interfere with the private arrangements of the Ameers." And in a letter to the governor-general in council, dated the 12th of August, 1843 (supp. coll. No. 157), Sir Charles Napier says: "I assuredly did not press the abdication of the turban by Meer Roostum, nor did I even advise it; on the contrary, my letters will shew that I recommended that he should not." In these two passages Sir Charles Napier asserts that he did not press the resignation of the turban; that he did not even advise it; that he recommended that it should not take place, and that on hearing that it had been effected, he disapproved of the act and suggested its voidance. It may be granted that

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three sides of the inclosure in which the residence was situated, the fourth being defended by a British

he did not openly advise the transfer of the turban, and consequently that he did not press it, but from his own declaration it is clear that he wished it: "The idea struck me at once that he (Meer Roostum) might go to Ali Moorad, who might induce him, as a family arrangement, to resign the turban to him (Ali Moorad)."—Letter (above quoted) December 20th. In the hope of effecting this object, he advised Meer Roostum to place himself in his brother's hands, as appears from Sir Charles Napier's own declaration in his letter of December 27th to the governor-general above quoted, from the letter to Meer Roostum in answer to the message, which has also been quoted, and from the other letter to the same chief, likewise quoted above, where Sir Charles Napier says: "You know that you offered to come to my camp, and that I advised you to go to your brother's fortress instead of coming to my camp." Further, he recommended Meer Roostum not only to go to his brother, but to "listen to his advice," and he knew full well what were Ali Moorad's views. Sir Charles Napier laid the train, expecting and desiring that it should be fired by another—it was so fired, and his language, in explaining his own share in the transaction, partakes more of the character of special pleading than might be looked for in a man bred, not in chambers, but in camps. In a note upon a statement made by Major Outram, p. 29 of the supplemehtary collection, Sir Charles Napier says: "It (the transfer of the turban) was the positive act of Meer Roostum, without my connivance, or even knowledge, till it was done." It was without the British general's "knowledge;" but after reading his own account of his views in sending Meer Roostum to Ali Moorad, can any one say that it was without his connivance?

But besides denying that he pressed or advised the abdication, Sir Charles Napier says that he recommended that it should not be made, and that his letters will shew this. The only letter found in the collections, which tends to bear out this assertion, is one addressed to Meer Ali Moorad, under date of the 23rd of December, 1843 (supplementary collection, p. 6, No. 14), which commences thus: "I think your highness will do well not to assume the turban, for the following reasons. People will say that the English

steamer, which, happily, lay in the river at no great distance. A hot fire was commenced and kept up

put it on your head, against the will of Meer Roostum. But do as you please. I only give you my advice as a friend who wishes to see you great and powerful in Sinde. This is the wish of my government. The governor-general has approved of all that I have said to you. If to be the chieftain gives you power, I should say, assume the turban. But it gives you none. You are strong without it. No one in Sinde can oppose you, no one out of Sinde can oppose you. The British government will secure you against all enemies." Now herein Sir Charles Napier certainly does express an opinion unfavourable to the assumption of the turban by Ali Moorad, but the force of that opinion is altogether neutralized by the words "do as you please." When a man has within his grasp the object of his highest ambition, and receives from a person of whose opinion he stands in awe a mild dissuasive from possessing himself of it, qualified, however, by the gracious concession "do as you please," there can be no doubt as to the result; he will "please" to take that which he covets. Thus acted Ali Moorad, and thus did Sir Charles Napier intend that he should act, notwithstanding the affectation of gently dissuading him from a step, which the general had placed Meer Roostum in his hands for the very purpose of forwarding.

The tortuous course of Sir Charles Napier in regard to the transfer of the turban is further illustrated by a proclamation which he issued from his camp at Khyrpore, on the 1st of January, 1843, and which appears in the supplementary collection, No. 15, on p. 6. In this document he says: "His highness the Ameer Roostum Khan sent a secret messenger to me to say that he was in the hands of his family, and could not act as his feelings of friendship for the English nation prompted him to do, and that if I would receive him he would escape and come to my camp. I answered his highness that I would certainly receive him, but that my advice was for him to consult with his brother, the Ameer Ali Moorad Khan. He took my advice. He went to the fort of Dejee to his brother. When I heard of this I was glad, for I thought that Sinde would be tranquil; that his highness would spend his last days in honour and in peace. I moved with my troops towards Khyrpore to

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for four hours by the assailants; but their attempts to effect an entrance were defeated by the judicious

force his violent family to disperse the wild bands that they had collected. I sent his highness word that I should visit him; I wanted to ask his advice as to the arrangements for the new treaty; I thought that he had again become the friend of the government that I serve. That night I heard that he had solemnly conferred upon his brother, the Ameer Ali Moorad, the turban of command over the Talpoor family, which brother is the heir to that honour. I thought this a very wise proceeding, and it added to my desire to meet his highness, that I might hear from his own lips all about these things, and report the same to the governor-general, being assured that these acts of his highness would recover for him the good opinion and friendship of the governor-general of India. My feelings towards his highness were those of friendship, honour, and peace. I even advised his highness's brother, the Ameer Ali Moorad, not to accept the turban, but to assist his brother, the chief, in the care of government."

The above passage is not of great length, but notwithstanding, the writer seems to have found it impossible to preserve any thing like consistency through it. He declares that he thought the surrender of the turban "a very wise proceeding," and that he wished to report it as one among various acts (what were the others does not appear) which would recover for Meer Roostum "the good opinion and friendship of the governor-general;" and yet he goes on to boast that he had advised Ali Moorad not to accept the turban, not to concur in an act which was "wise," and which, moreover, in the opinion of Sir Charles Napier, would be gratifying to the head of the government which he served. It is proper to state that a version of Sir Charles Napier's proclamation differing in some respects from that just quoted appears in the supplementary collection, but the variations do not clear up the British general's character for consistency or plain dealing. In the second version, the more important part of the passage extracted stands thus:—"That same evening I had intelligence that his highness had conferred the turban of the Talpoor family on his brother, Meer Ali Moorad, because he was the rightful possessor of it. I considered that this was well, and desired

efforts of Captain Conway, the officer in command, ably and zealously supported by his subalterns, more earnestly to meet his highness, in order that I might hear from himself what he had done; and also, that I might be able to state the same to his lordship the governor-general; and I thought that, by his observing such a line of conduct, he would have re-established himself in the favour of the British government; my wish was, that friendship and honour should continue with Meer Roostum; and I gave his brother, Meer Ali Moorad, advice that he should not take the turban, but that he should assist his highness in the arrangements for his country." The reader will see that this leaves the matter in question as it stood. The variations between the two versions of the proclamation are greater than could have been expected; but they do not affect the views of Sir Charles Napier, as to the transfer of the turban, nor the character of his proceedings in respect of that transfer.

Sir Charles Napier alleges, that he not only abstained from advising the transfer of the turban—that he not only advised the direct contrary—but that after he heard of the transfer, he "disapproved of it;" sent a message recommending the rescission of the act, and acquiesced in giving it effect only on being assured that it was both regularly executed, and irrevocable. Now it is to be feared that the word "disapproved" is here used in a manner which, if not altogether unwarrantable, is at least obscure and equivocal. How could Sir Charles Napier disapprove of that which he had taken pains to bring about, and which he invariably affirmed to be desirable for the British government? It is to be presumed, therefore, that in saying he "disapproved," he means not that he felt disapprobation, but that he expressed it. His communication to Meer Ali Moorad must have been a deliberate piece of double-dealing, or his avowal, several weeks before, of a desire that Meer Roostum should give the turban to Meer Ali Moorad, must have been insincere. There is no reason for embracing the latter branch of the alternative, and, consequently, there is no choice but to accept the former.

Meer Roostum, after going to his brother Ali Moorad, as advised by Sir Charles Napier, and surrendering to that brother the turban, as wished, though not advised, by Sir Charles Napier, subsequently fled from his brother, declared that the surrender of the turban was extorted from him (as most probably it was), and

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Lieutenant Harding and Ensign Pennefather, of her Majesty's 22nd, and by two volunteers, Captain

alleged that Sir Charles Napier had recommended him to go to his brother, and be governed by his advice, which recommendation he had followed. On this Sir Charles Napier remarks, in a letter to Major Outram, Feb. 11, 1843, Supplementary Collection, page 32, No, 57:—"Roostum's plea of being sent to Ali Moorad by me is a shallow affair; because, in the first place, he sent a secret message (by Moyadeen, I believe Brown told me), to say he was to all intents a prisoner in Khyrpore, and that he had tried to send away his family, and was obliged to bring them back after they were on their road, and that he would escape and come to my camp. Brown knows all this matter. The messenger said, he (Roostum) would do whatever I advised. My answer was, 'Take your brother's advice; go to him, and either stay with him, or I will escort you to my camp.' His flying from his brother's camp proves that he was not a prisoner; his not flying to mine proves either his duplicity or his imbecility; I believe the latter; but imbecility is not a legitimate excuse for rulers. I have only to deal with his acts; he played you the same trick; he even now stands out; he cannot say Ali Moorad still influences him. I believe he did at first, but does not now; and I am half inclined now to doubt the fact, though I did not do so at first; but, as I said, the intrigues of these people are nothing to me; only I will not let his cunning attempt to cast his conduct upon my advice pass. He went contrary to my advice, and now wants to make out that he acted by it. I send you a copy of my letter." A more extraordinary and painful specimen of floundering than is afforded by this passage, is rarely to be found. "Roostum's plea of being sent to Ali Moorad by" Sir Charles Napier, was not "a shallow affair;" he was so sent, and no sophistry can explain the fact away. Indeed, a few lines after the above, Sir Charles Napier admits the fact. "My answer was, 'Take your brother's advice; go to him, and either stay with him, or I will escort you to my camp.'" The reckless mode of arguing adopted by Sir Charles Napier, in regard to Meer Roostum's flight from his brother, is not less remarkable than the rest of the passage—"his flying from his brother's camp proves that he was not a prisoner"—did Sir Charles Napier never know of a prisoner making his escape? "His not flying to mine

Green, of the 21st native infantry, and Captain Wells, of the 15th. Captain Brown, Bengal engi-

proves either his duplicity or his imbecility." It proves neither one nor the other, though possibly the old chief might be under the influence of both; but, at all events, he had little cause for confidence in one who had recommended him to trust himself to the advice and keeping of a rival, by whose threats or cajolery his dignity had been subverted. The conclusion of the above extract is worthy of all that precedes it. "I will not let his cunning attempt to cast his conduct on my advice pass. He went contrary to my advice, and now wants to make out that he acted by it. I send you a copy of my letter." On first reading this, it is impossible not to suppose that the words "he went contrary to my advice" must apply to the flight of Meer Roostum from his brother, not to his going to him; but the accuracy of this construction seems doubtful, because the letter, a copy of which is referred to, is that to Meer Roostum, in answer to his secret communication, and which is quoted above (page 427). If it be meant that Meer Roostum went to his brother contrary to Sir Charles Napier's advice, the assertion is one of the boldest experiments upon the extent of human credulity ever hazarded. After the most careful consideration of this passage, no one can feel satisfied that he is in possession of its meaning; and the impression left on the mind is, that the writer felt that he was struggling with difficulties which could not be overcome; that he was conscious of the badness of his cause, and of the impossibility of making out even a plausible case in his favour. No degree of ingenuity can give to the conduct pursued towards Meer Roostum the colour of straightforwardness and honesty.

Throughout this inquiry, the conduct of Sir Charles Napier has been tried solely upon his own testimony. Much might be added, if the statements made on the other side were admitted; but it is better that the case should be rested upon evidence, to which even the friends and defenders of the British general cannot object. Upon such evidence it is clear, that though, not in appearance, Sir Charles Napier was in substance, the party chiefly instrumental in transferring the power and station of Meer Roostum to Meer Ali Moorad; and that, subsequently, finding that the act was regarded as odious, he vainly struggled to relieve himself from responsibility in respect to it.

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neers, was dispatched to the steamer, and there rendered valuable assistance in directing her fire. The number of men under Captain Conway was entirely inadequate to any protracted defence, and the stock of ammunition was scanty. A reinforcement of men and a supply of ammunition were expected by another steamer, but she arrived without either, and it became obvious that there was nothing to be done but to effect a retreat with as little loss as possible. An attempt was made to remove the property within the residence; but the camp followers became alarmed, and after reaching the steamer with their first loads, could not be brought to return; while the fighting men had employment more important as well as more stirring than looking after baggage. The greater portion of the property was therefore abandoned, and the British party evacuated their quarters in a body, covered by a few skirmishers. The movement was effected with perfect order; and the British commander, with his brave escort, arrived in safety at the camp of Sir Charles Napier.

There was now no mode of deciding the existing differences but by the sword. Sir Charles Napier accordingly advanced to a place called Meeanee, about six miles from Hyderabad, which he reached on the 17th of February, where he found the Ameers posted in great force. Their position was strong, their flank being protected by two woods, which were connected by the dry bed of the river Fulailee, having a high bank, behind which and in the woods were the enemy posted. In front of the extreme right, and on the edge of the wood protecting it,

was a village. Having made his observations, the British general prepared for attack; posting his artillery on the right of the line, and sending forward skirmishers to drive out the enemy's force. The advance then took place from the right in echelon of battalions; the left being declined to escape the fire of the village. The artillery and her Majesty's 22nd formed the leading echelon; the 25th native infantry the second, the 12th native infantry the third, and the 1st grenadier native infantry the fourth.

About a hundred yards from the bank the British opened the fire of their musketry in answer to that of the enemy. Thenceforward the official details of the battle are neither very full nor very clear. This much is certain, that the conflict was obstinate and sanguinary, and that for a time the event was doubtful. The British, however, continued to press determinedly on their opponents; and a charge from the 9th Bengal light cavalry (which formed the reserve), aided by some Sinde horse, completed the discomfiture of the enemy, who slowly retired. The victory cost the British a loss of sixty-two killed, and one hundred and ninety-five wounded. Among the number was a large proportion of officers.* The

* The following is a list of the officers who suffered :—

9th regiment light cavalry—Lieut. Bt. Captain and Adjutant Cookson, killed; Captain A. Tucker, Lt. Bt. Captain S. Smith, Lt. H. G. C. Plowden, Ensign J. H. Firth, wounded.

Her Majesty's 22nd regiment—Captain W. W. Tew, killed; Lieut.-Col. J. L. Pennefather, Captain Conway, Lieut. F. P. Harding, Ensign R. Pennefather, Ensign H. Bowden, wounded.

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loss of the enemy was estimated at five thousand; but this amount seems incredible.*

Immediately after the battle six of the Ameers (three of Khyrpore and three of Hyderabad) surrendered themselves prisoners; and on the 20th of February Sir Charles Napier entered the capital of Lower Sinde. But the contest was not yet at an end. Shere Mahomed, Ameer of Meerpore, remained in arms; and on the 24th of March the British commander marched out of Hyderabad to

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12th regiment native infantry—Captain and Bt. Major Jackson, Lt. and Bt. Captain Meade, Lieutenant Wood, killed; Ensign Holbrow, wounded.

25th regiment native infantry—Major Teesdale, killed; Lieut. Qr.-M. Phayre, Lieut. Bourdillon, wounded.

Staff—Major Wyllie, Assist. Adjt.-Gen. S. and B., wounded.

* One of the most pleasing duties of a general is to render just praise to those who have distinguished themselves under his command. It is scarcely a less gratifying duty to those whose humbler province it is to record the results of the soldier's efforts; but the list of officers favourably noticed by Sir Charles Napier is so long, that to introduce their names into the text would have the effect of converting a considerable portion of it into a mere catalogue. It is, however, not fitting that such names should be passed over, and they are consequently here presented. The officers named in the general's despatch are Major Teesdale (killed), Major Jackson (killed), Captains Meade, Tew, and Cookson (all killed); Lieutenant Wood (killed), Lieutenant-Colonel Pennefather (wounded), Major Wyllie (wounded), Captains Tucker and Conway (both wounded), Lieutenants Harding and Phayre (both wounded), Lieutenant-Colonel Pattle, Major Story, Captain Jacob, Major Lloyd, Captains Whitlie and Hutt, Major Waddington, Major Reid, Major Poole, Captain Jackson, Lieutenant McMurdo, Major McPherson, Lieutenant Pelly, Lieutenant Thompson, Lieutenant Younghusband, Captain Henderson, Lieutenant Boileau, Lieutenant Outlaw, Captain Taite, Lieutenants Leeson and Brennan.

attack him. He found him at the head of a great force posted behind a nullah, which had been partially scarped and otherwise strengthened. Shere Mahomed, perceiving that the British force was out-flanking him on the right, moved in that direction; and Sir Charles Napier, believing that the movement drew him away from that part of the nullah prepared for defence, chose the moment for commencing an attack. A troop of horse artillery, under Major Leslie, was ordered to move forward, and endeavour to rake the nullah, while the 9th light cavalry and Poonah horse were ordered to advance in line on the left of the artillery, which was supported on the right by her Majesty's 22nd; that regiment being, however, considerably retired, to avoid interfering with the oblique fire of the artillery. The artillery opened upon the enemy's position, and the British line advanced in echelon from the left, the Queen's 22nd leading the attack.

From the official account of the battle, the following particulars are to be collected. The enemy appearing to shrink from the cross fire of the British artillery, Major Stack gave an impetus to their movement by a brilliant charge upon their left flank with the third cavalry, under Captain Delamain, and the Sinde horse, under Captain Jacob. These troops crossed the nullah, and pursued the enemy for several miles. While this was in progress, the Queen's 22nd, under Major Poole, commanding the brigade, and Captain George, commanding the corps, attacked the nullah on the left, marching up to it

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under a heavy fire of matchlocks, without returning a shot, till they came within forty paces of the intrenchment, which they forthwith stormed in gallant style. Lieutenant Coote, who was the first man to mount the rampart, seized one of the enemy's standards, and was severely wounded while waving it to encourage his men. The efforts of the 22nd were supported by batteries, commanded by Captain Willoughby and Captain Hutt, the fire from which crossed that of Major Leslie; while the Poonah horse, under Captain Taite, and the 9th cavalry, under Major Story, turned the enemy's right flank, pursuing and cutting down the fugitives. A brigade, consisting of the 12th, 21st, and 25th regiments, commanded respectively by Captain Fisher, Captain Stevens, and Captain Jackson, the brigade being under Major Woodburn, was also meritoriously engaged, supported by the fire of a battery under Captain Whitlie, on the right of which were the 1st and 8th regiments, under Major Brown and Major Clibborn, which regiments appear to have manifested great coolness and great anxiety for action. Of the details of the battle little can be gathered; and all the information furnished amounts in fact to this:—that Sir Charles Napier, with a force the component parts of which are only incidentally mentioned, met a large body of Beloochees, engaged and defeated them. The loss sustained by the British amounted to two hundred and sixty-seven killed and wounded. Among the killed were two valuable officers, Captain C. Garrett, of the 9th light cavalry, and Lieutenant

J. C. Smith, of the Bombay artillery. The latter officer fell while exhibiting an instance of desperate valour, in riding along the top of the nullah in advance of his battery, with a view of ascertaining where his guns could be brought to bear with the greatest effect.*

After this battle, Sir Charles Napier marched forward, and took possession of Meerpore. The reduction of Omercote, situate in the desert, and a fortress of some importance (with reference to Oriental notions), was the next object sought. A detachment was dispatched against this place, originally under Captain Whitlie; but Major Woodburn subsequently assumed the command. Acting on information reaching him at a distance from the spot, Sir Charles Napier ordered a retreat when the force sent against Omercote was about twenty miles from the fortress. At the moment when the order was received, the officer in command was informed that

* The following officers were wounded:—Lieutenant T. C. Pownall, 8th company Golundauze battalion; Lieutenant Taite, of the Poonah horse; Lieutenants Chute, Coote, Evans, and Brennan, of her Majesty's 22nd; Ensign Pennefather, of the same regiment; Lieutenants Burr and Wilkinson, of the 21st native infantry; and Lieutenant McMurdo, acting-assistant quarter-master-general. The following officers are favourably noticed in Sir Charles Napier's report of the battle:—Lieutenant-Colonel Pattle, Lieutenant Thompson, Major McPherson, Lieutenant Brown, Captain Tucker, Lieutenants Rathborne, Hill, North, Battersby, Pelly, and McMurdo; Majors Lloyd and Leslie; Captains Willoughby, Whitlie, and Hutt; Major Waddington, Captain Henderson, Lieutenants Outlaw and Boileau, Captain Blenkins, Lieutenant Leeson, and Inspecting-Surgeon Bell.

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the place had been abandoned by the garrison; but the order to retire seems to have been peremptory, and he did not feel justified in disregarding it. Under the influence of this embarrassment, the capture of Omercote might have been postponed indefinitely, but for the energy of Captain Brown, who, mounting his horse, performed, without halting, a journey of eighty miles, under the burning sun of Sinde, in order to put Sir Charles Napier in possession of the report which had been received by Major Woodburn, and obtain his revised decision. Permission being given to advance, it was acted upon by Major Woodburn. The final march was commenced at midnight on the 4th of April. It lay over a good road, but through jungle, which became thicker and higher as Omercote was approached; and it was not till arriving within eight hundred yards of the north-west frontier, that a fair sight of the fort could be obtained. On a party of horse approaching to reconnoitre, a few armed men shewed themselves on the walls, and this induced Major Woodburn to order Captain Jacob, with the Sinde horse, to proceed round to the eastern face of the fort, to intercept the escape of the garrison, if they were disposed to resort to such a step, or to induce them to display their strength, if they were prepared for defence. The chief persons of the Hindoo population within the place came out, however, and tendered their submission to the British commander, assuring him, at the same time, that the greater part of the

garrison had fled some days before, that there remained few armed men within the fort, and that those few had no desire to resist, but were ready to depart, if the safety of their lives were guaranteed. An officer was dispatched to inform them that their lives would be spared, on condition of their coming out and laying down their arms. In the meantime some guns were brought up, and placed in position, Major Woodburn rightly concluding "that the sight of them" was likely to "hasten the determination of the garrison." There was no necessity for employing them, the remnant of the garrison meeting the communication made to them by opening their gates, surrendering the keys, and laying down their arms.

Sir Charles Napier had directed a squadron of horse to be left as a garrison for Omercote. Major Woodburn determined to add to this a company of infantry, and his reasons appear well founded. "I beg," he says, "to submit to the major-general's consideration, that foraging parties will, from all I can hear, be obliged to go often to the distance of many miles, and will be required to be in strength, as there are now many parties of the followers of the Ameer Shere Mahomed scattered about the country, as well as others of different tribes, who are always to be met with where forage is most plentiful. To make these foraging parties sufficiently strong might, were a squadron left alone, often leave too small a garrison in the fort; and on this account I have been induced to add the infantry, so as to

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admit of all the cavalry being absent at one time, when such is required."*

Sir Charles Napier concluded his despatch to the governor-general, announcing the occupation of Omercote, with the words, "Thus, my lord, I think I may venture to say Sinde is now subdued."† But the subjugation of a country inhabited, for the most part, by a wild and warlike population, is a thing easy to talk of, but not easy to accomplish. The governor of Sinde (for to this office Sir Charles Napier had been appointed by Lord Ellenborough), for many months after uttering this declaration, found that he had something more to do than merely to make the requisite arrangements for carrying on the civil administration of the country which he represented as subdued. The Ameer Shah Mahomed continued to break the tranquillity upon which Sir Charles Napier had calculated. The chief was attacked on the 8th of June by a British force, under Lieutenant-Colonel Roberts, consisting of twelve companies of native infantry, followed by the 6th, 15th, and 20th regiments, a troop of the 3rd light cavalry, and a battery of four guns. Shah Mahomed was encamped at a place called Peer Assee, with a force reported to amount to two thousand men. On the approach of Colonel Roberts, the enemy was discovered in retreat. Captain Walker was dispatched with the cavalry to intercept this

* Despatch addressed by Major Woodburn to assistant adjutant-general in Sinde, April 5, 1843.

† Despatch, 5th of April, 1843.

movement, and succeeded in destroying many of the fugitives. The remainder of the detachment continued to advance, and a party of the grenadier company of the 20th native infantry, scouring an inclosure, discovered Shah Mahomed, with three or four servants, concealed in some underwood. He seemed at first disposed to resist; but Captain Travers, of the 23rd Bombay infantry, coming up, he delivered his sword to him. Thus terminated the endeavours of this chief to disturb the British in Sinde.

Another Ameer, named Shere Mahomed, was still at the head of a large force of Beloochees; but his situation was one of peril. Colonel Roberts' column was threatening him on the north. Sir Charles Napier, with the troops under his personal command, was marching upon him from the south; and another force, under Captain Jacob, cut him off from retreat to the desert. The force last named, Shere Mahomed determined to attack; and his choice was probably governed by two considerations: in the first place, it was the weakest of the three bodies of troops by whom he was menaced; and in the second, it interfered with his chance of escaping the others. On the night of the 13th of June, Captain Jacob received information that the Ameer was about to attack him; and about three o'clock on the morning of the 14th, the enemy were discovered approaching. The advance, however, was too slow to meet the expectations of the British officer in command; and, leaving a troop and

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a company to protect his camp, he went out with the rest of his force in search of the tardily advancing enemy. The Beloochees formed on the bank of a nullah, in considerable strength, both horse and foot, and opened three guns, which advanced on the British, and shewed a front of defiance. But its continuance was brief; for no sooner had the British commander formed his line, and brought his guns into play, than the Beloochees were perceived moving off; and on Colonel Jacob advancing with the Sinde horse, they broke, dispersed, and fled in all directions, leaving their guns in the hands of the British, without an effort to save them. The deprivation of these, and of several standards, constituted almost their entire loss, for five or six only were killed. But the dispersion was complete, and Shere Mahomed fled from the field with ten horsemen, the remnant of a force of about four thousand that he had brought into action.

Since this period Sinde has been more tranquil; but it will probably be long, ere the irruptions of the wild Beloochee tribes shall cease to afford ground for alarm.

The proceedings of the British government, with regard to Sinde, were never popular in England, and even the splendour of victory failed of securing public approbation to a course of policy believed to be based in injustice. The governor-general, in a despatch to the Secret Committee, dated in June, entered into an elaborate defence of that policy, obviously under the impression that such a step was

not unnecessary. As this document was the official vindication of a series of acts regarded by a great majority of observers as of very questionable character, some examination of its contents seems to be called for.*

* With a view to fairness, the vindication itself, as given in the parliamentary collection, follows :—

"On the withdrawal of the British armies from Kabool to the Sutledj, I had to decide what course I should pursue with respect to the Lower Indus. I had to decide whether the Lower Indus should be altogether evacuated, and our armies everywhere resume the positions they occupied before the Affghan war; or whether, while the old positions were re-occupied upon the Sutledj, certain points should still be held upon the Lower Indus, which would ensure the strict performance of commercial treaties, and give us the military command of that river.

"The withdrawal to the Sutledj, and the withdrawal from the Lower Indus, appeared to me to be very different questions. The withdrawal to the Sutledj was dictated by the clearest views of military and political prudence; I shall not recapitulate the reasons for that measure, as they have been placed on record in what has been called my Proclamation of the 1st of October, 1842.

"I have adopted every measure which could have the effect of giving the appearance of triumph to the return of the armies from Kabool; but still it was a retirement from an advanced position, and it was the first retirement ever rendered necessary to a British army.

"I was deeply sensible of the impression which the reverses at Kabool had produced upon the minds of native princes, of the native population, and of our own troops. I knew that all that had taken place since, and all I had said and done, although it must have much diminished, could not have obliterated that impression, and restored to our government, and to our army, the place they had before held in the opinion of India.

"To have added to retirement to the Sutledj, retirement from the Lower Indus; to have abandoned every part of the advanced position we had taken up in 1839; to have withdrawn from Kurachee and from Sukkur amidst the insults, and exposed, as

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The defence commences by a reference to the state of affairs at the time of the withdrawal of the

we should have been, to the attacks of the Beloochees upon our rear-guard; to have practically abandoned, as we should thereby have done, all the benefits which we might expect ultimately to derive from the commercial treaties concluded in 1839 (for it was idle to imagine, after what had passed, that, without the presence of force, those treaties would be observed); to have abandoned also all the great prospective advantages which may be expected to be derived from substituting the Indus for the Ganges, as the line of military communication between England and the north-west provinces, and to have left open to the ambition of the Sikhs, or of an European power, that route of which we had demonstrated the practicability and the importance; to have done all these things, without positive instructions from you, or without some overpowering necessity, would have been, in my opinion, contrary to my duty, because inconsistent with our national interest and the national honour.

"Such a measure would have confirmed the most exaggerated accounts which had been circulated of our disasters. It would have been humiliating to the army.

"There was no overpowering necessity for retirement. There is no difficulty in holding the positions of Kurachee and Sukkur. The first is, during the largest portion of the year, accessible in a few days from Bombay; the latter is, during the whole year, accessible in less than three weeks from Ferozepore. We can, besides, command the river by our steam-vessels, if we have a sufficient number of them well adapted to the navigation.

"The misinterpretations placed upon some provisions of the commercial treaty, and the various violations of its letter and of its spirit, even while our armies were in force in Sinde, satisfied me that, unless some penalty were imposed upon the Ameers for such infractions of their engagements, there could be no security whatever for their future observance.

"I saw troops collected by the Ameers, contrary to their usage, and without legitimate cause; but such collection of troops in the presence of a British army is, in itself, an offence, and an indication of hostility not to be misunderstood or overlooked.

"With respect to the authenticity of certain letters of hostile

British army to the Sutledj; and it is urged, that the question of withdrawing from the Lower Indus rested

character, ascribed to the Ameers, or to their agents, you will have observed how strongly I impressed upon Sir Charles Napier the necessity of caution in coming to a decision on that point. I had, however, the fullest reliance upon his sense of justice; and with this reliance I felt that he, on the spot, with every opportunity of personal communication with those conversant with such matters, was infinitely more competent to form a correct conclusion than I could be, at Simla. To him, therefore, I confidently remitted the question.

"I am satisfied with the grounds upon which he decided that the letters were authentic.

"Major Outram's doubt as to the authenticity of the letter of Meer Roostum Khan to the Maharajah Shere Sing appears to have rested upon the circumstance of the party whose information led to the seizure of the letter, being inimical to Meer Roostum Khan; but, assuredly, information tending to criminate Meer Roostum could not be expected from one of his friends. Lieutenant Postans believed the document to be genuine. Major Outram's suggestions to Mr. Clerk, as to the use which might be made of the letter, could hardly have been given, had he entertained a serious doubt of its authenticity. Mr. Clerk never had the opportunity of elucidating, in a personal conference with the Maharajah, in which he thought it could best be done, the doubts to which this letter, and the intercepted letter to Dewan Sawun Mull, gave rise; doubts which in his mind must have had reference more to his belief in the loyalty of the Maharajah, to whom the letter was addressed by Meer Roostum Khan, than to his confidence in that of Meer Roostum, who was unknown to him. Mr. Clerk truly observes, that 'he does not think the question could, at any time, be well judged of here;' that is, at Simla. I thought so too, and, therefore, referred the question altogether to Sir C. Napier, and the officers employed in Sinde.

"It appears, by Sir Charles Napier's letter of the 17th November, that Major Outram had doubts whether Meer Roostum was privy to the writing of the letter; but that the letter had his seal, and was written by his confidential minister, there was no doubt. Lieutenant Brown assured Sir C. Napier that there could not be

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on very different grounds. The reasons assigned for the difference are, that such a course would have

the slightest doubt of the authenticity of the letter. There has been no officer employed in Sinde, upon whose opinion I would more confidently proceed than on that of Lieutenant Brown. Every thing that has come to my knowledge, with regard to that officer, has tended to make me entertain a feeling of great respect for his ability and his character.

"But while doubts have thus been thrown upon the letter of Meer Roostum to the Maharajah, none have been entertained with respect to the proposed agreement between Meer Roostum and Meer Nusseer Khan, 'binding them to act together in every affair, whether for good or evil, peace or war;' which proposed agreement, to the best of the judgment and belief of Major Outram, is in the handwriting of Meer Roostum himself. When that proposed agreement is considered, in connection with Meer Nusseer's conduct, and with the collection of troops, before any intimation was given to the Ameers of any intention of proposing any modification of the treaty, it is impossible to view it in any other light than as an act of hostility.

"That the letter of Meer Nusseer Khan to Beebruck Boogtie bore his seal, there can now be no doubt. The seal upon that letter, by all before believed to be that of Meer Nusseer, was found to correspond exactly with the seal upon a letter of that Ameer, which bore also the handwriting of his confidential moonshee.

"Much care appears to have been taken to investigate all the circumstances attending the escape of Mahomed Shurreef. It seems impossible to doubt the participation of Meer Roostum's minister in that escape of an enemy to the British government, proceeding to act hostilely against us.

"I cannot admit the convenient doctrine that a chief is not to be responsible for the act of his minister. That minister, known to be so hostile to the British government, remained with Meer Roostum to the last.

"I have endeavoured to judge my own conduct as I would that of another; and I cannot think, in reviewing it, that in the circumstances in which I stood, I was unjustified in requiring from the Ameers the specific modifications of their engagements which I instructed Sir Charles Napier to propose to them.

been humiliating; that there was no overpowering necessity for it; that our advanced positions were

"These modifications of the existing treaty involved on our part the abandonment of a considerable revenue, payable to us every year by the Ameers, under the name of tribute. They involved, undoubtedly, the sacrifice, on their part, of lands of more than equivalent value; but the penalty imposed did not seem disproportioned to the offence I had reason to believe they had committed.

"You have been long in possession of the reason which induced me to think that the abolition of tribute was in itself a good. You have also long been aware of the grounds on which I deemed it politic to make a gift to the Nawab of Bhawlpore, of territory which formerly belonged to his state. Had you disapproved of the general principles upon which the new treaty proposed to the Ameers was founded, still more had you disapproved of the intention I had announced of holding military possession of certain points upon the Lower Indus, after the evacuation of Affghanistan, I presume that you would have acquainted me with that opinion; in the absence of any intimation to that effect, I had reason to suppose that a new treaty, based upon those principles, if legitimately obtainable, would not be unacceptable to you.

"Had the Ameers seen fit to reject the treaty proposed to them, and to support that rejection openly by arms, they would have pursued a legimate course, and their defeat in fair fight would have admitted of subsequent arrangements on the basis of their retaining a portion of their territory, and the exercise of sovereign authority: but, from the first, while they of course denied the correctness of the charges made against them, they professed their willingness to submit to the penalty imposed; still, they collected more troops. At last, having drawn the British general into the vicinity of Hyderabad, having then actually signed the draft of the treaty, they, with a portion of their troops, made a treacherous attack upon the residence of the British commissioner, and, with all their forces united, they opposed the further advance of our army at Meeanee.

"It would be to take an incorrect view of the treachery of the Ameers were we to regard them, from their first acquiescence in

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maintainable without difficulty, and that it was not desirable to abandon the Indus to the Sikhs, or to a

the proposed treaty, in the first week of December, to the attack on the residency on the 15th of February, as proceeding upon any other principle than that of collecting all their forces to surround and destroy our army, while they endeavoured to deceive the general by professing their readiness to submit.

"When Sir Charles Napier gained the battle of Meeanee he had 22,000 men in his front; but he had also had for some days 10,000 men in his rear, who had crossed the Indus to attack him.

"Such large assemblages of armed men cannot take place in any country without much previous preparation. It was in this case a levy *en masse* of the ruling tribe from every part of Sinde.

"Our first duty is to our own army; and it is due to that army that we should not forgive, or leave without the most exemplary and deterring punishment, the far-seeing and long-designing treachery by which its destruction was to be effected.

"The example of the Affghans at Kabool was to be followed by the Beloochees at Hyderabad; but the spirit in which they were met was different from that which at Kabool led to the destruction of a British army.

"It was my duty to mark such conduct by an extent of punishment which should be a warning to every chief and people in India, which should give future security to the persons of British ministers, and protect British troops from treacherous aggression.

"The battle of Meeanee entirely changed the position in which the British government stood with respect to the Ameers of Sinde.

"To have placed confidence in them thereafter would have been impossible.

"To have only exacted from them large cessions of territory, would have been to give them what remained as the means of levying war for the purpose of regaining what was ceded.

"Foreigners in Sinde, they had only held their power by the sword, and by the sword they have lost it.

"Their position was widely different from that of a native prince succeeding a long line of ancestors, the object of the hereditary affection and obedience of his subjects.

European power; that the Ameers had committed violations of the commercial treaty, and that the

"They had no claim to consideration on the ground of ancient possession, or of national prejudice. Certainly, they had none arising out of the goodness of their government. To take advantage of the crime they had committed to overthrow their power, was a duty to the people they had so long misgoverned.

"It was essential to the settlement of the country, that I should take at once a decided course with respect to the Ameers; and, having no doubt that I was justified in dethroning them, I determined on at once adopting and announcing that decision.

"Their removal from the country with which they were no longer to be connected as sovereigns, was a measure of obvious expediency. It has apparently had the beneficial effect I anticipated from it. The willing acquiescence of the people in our rule, and the adhesion of many of the chiefs to our government, are already the just rewards of an unhesitating and decisive policy, which, in taking away every hope from the Ameers, has given confidence to their late oppressed subjects.

"Some resistance on the part of the Ameers, I regarded as not an impossible event, and I considered that, having once felt our strength, they might thereafter be more strict observers of their engagements. Treachery, such as that we experienced, had not come within my calculations. A victory, decisive as that at Meeanee, and gained under such circumstances, was to me a wholly unexpected event. As I have said, it entirely changed our position, and I was compelled at once to decide what policy should be adopted in the new state of things. I could not, for the reasons I have given, reinstate the Ameers. Any other arrangement than I have made, would have imposed upon us all the burthen of protecting a government, without affording us the means of benefiting the people or ourselves. Any half measure would have failed. Adopting the decisive measure of taking the province into our hands, I determined to adapt the means to the end, and not to omit any step by which security could be given to the new possession.

"The Ameers were removed beyond sea. All arrears of revenue due to them on the day of the battle of Meeanee were remitted; the transit duties were abolished; the neighbouring

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imposition of some penalty upon them was, therefore, expedient; that the Ameers were collecting troops;

states of Joudpore and Jessulmere were, as well as Bhawlpore, interested in the overthrow of the Beloochees, by the intimation that their ancient possessions would be restored. The inhabitants of Sinde were assured by proclamation, that the property of all who laid down their arms would be respected. As far as possible, the former officers of the government were employed, and everywhere as little change as possible has been made, beyond that essential change of substituting justice for injustice in the administration. The police has already attained some degree of efficiency. The most able engineers will be employed for the purpose of surveying, and of restoring, if it can be done, the ancient water-courses whereby the country was fertilized, and especially that, first closed by the vindictive and destructive policy of the rulers of Sinde, which once gave prosperity to the dominions of our ally the Rao of Cutch.

"The vast tracts which the Ameers have converted into shikargahs will also be surveyed. Such of the woods as it may be necessary to retain will be carefully preserved; and extensive portions of land, having the richest soil, lately reserved for hunting-grounds by the Ameers, will be restored to cultivation.

"Some of these measures have originated with myself; in others I have been anticipated by the governor of Sinde; in all, I know I shall have his most cordial co-operation.

"One of the measures which, in the first instance, I adopted,—that for the abolition of slavery,—has produced an extent of relief far beyond what I had expected. I was by no means aware of the degree to which that dreadful scourge of mankind had added to the misfortunes of the people of Sinde.

"It is impossible to calculate the extent to which, by opening ancient courses to the waters of the Indus, and by extending the means of irrigation, we may improve the productiveness of the soil. As little can we calculate the extent to which the assurance of protection given to the people may increase their industry, and thus finally promote their prosperity. You may be assured that no exertion of mine shall be wanting to make the conquest of Sinde by the British arms no less the source of happiness to the inhabitants of that country, than of advantage to our own."

that they were charged with writing letters of hostile character, which Sir Charles Napier determined to be genuine; that two of the Ameers entered into an agreement, binding themselves to act together in every affair, whether for good or evil, peace or war; that the servants of some of the Ameers acted hostilely, and that their masters were accountable for their actions. These are the grounds from which the conclusion is deduced, that it was just to demand the substitution, in place of the existing treaty, of one more favourable to the British government, which demand may be regarded as the first important step in the dealings of Lord Ellenborough with Sinde.

The withdrawing from the Lower Indus was, in one view, a very different measure from the withdrawal to the Sutledj. When it became a question whether or not the British should retain their positions on the Lower Indus, the impression produced by the disasters in Affghanistan had been in a great degree effaced by the triumphant march to Kabool. It will be recollected, that before this march the British generals beyond the Sutledj had been urged to return with all speed. This would, undoubtedly, have been "humiliating," and the effect might, perhaps, have been fatal. Happily, the officers commanding, both in Upper and Lower Affghanistan, were men not open to the influence of panic. They returned, but not till after they had vindicated their country's honour. Surely, it could not be so humiliating, or so disatrous, to quit Sinde at a moment of triumph, as it would have been to quit Affghanistan under the

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disgrace of defeat. Yet the governor-general, who was prepared for the latter step, shrank from the former. It was, at least, as safe to retire from Sinde victorious, as to retire from Affghanistan beaten; and the difference which exists between the two cases, as far as national military character is concerned, tells alike, against the course urged upon the generals commanding in Affghanistan in the one case, and the opposite course voluntarily taken by the governor-general in the other.

To the argument that there was no overpowering necessity for retiring from Sinde, it is unnecessary to say any thing further than that its adoption will justify a government in keeping any thing which it is strong enough to hold; and if a government may thus argue, why may not an individual? The British were in Sinde, and it was believed that they had the power to remain. The question of how they came there appears not to have been thought of. It is true, that Lord Ellenborough was not accountable for the original wrong inflicted on the rulers of Sinde; but he did not hesitate to add to that wrong, and thus to identify himself with an evil policy. Further—in the doctrine that nothing should be yielded except to an overwhelming necessity, we find a severe condemnation of Lord Ellenborough's proposed policy in regard to Affghanistan, that of quitting the country without an effort to vindicate the national honour. There was no overwhelming necessity for this, yet he would have done it.

But it was not to be expected that Lord Ellen-

borough should sever the British connection with Sinde; before his arrival in India, the rights of the Ameers, as independent rulers, had been violated, by forcing upon them a treaty containing provisions which they regarded with great, and as the event shewed, with very just apprehensions. It would be too much to maintain that Lord Ellenborough was bound to set aside this treaty, and to restore the state of affairs existing previously to its being made. Such things have occurred in India as for a governor-general summarily to annul engagements solemnly concluded by his predecessor, even when one of the contracting parties was thereby exposed to ruin, and was most anxious to receive the protection of the great European power which now gives law to the Eastern world; but Lord Ellenborough might justly hesitate at the adoption of such a course; and assuredly, had he adopted it in the case of Sinde, he would have been met in certain quarters by clamorous accusations of neglect of duty, in having abandoned the Indus, that great line of communication with Upper Asia, to which our merchants and manufacturers had been taught to look, as affording the means of deluging with British goods, countries known only by name. The governor-general could not reasonably be blamed, had he only endeavoured to maintain things as he found them; but with this he was not content. He was resolved to have a new treaty, more humiliating and more hateful to the Ameers than that which preceded it; and in endeavouring to accomplish this object, he preci-

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pitated his government into a new and dangerous war, ending, indeed, successfully, and thus saving the military reputation of the British from blot, but leaving on their character for honour and good faith a deep and enduring stain.

The provisions of the commercial treaty, it was said, had not been strictly adhered to by the Ameers, and the charge was probably true; but if every trifling breach of treaty committed by a native prince, or by his servants, were to furnish occasion for war, the British government of India would never be at peace for a single year with any one of the states with whom it is in alliance. The alleged aggressions were all very slight; they afforded proper ground for remonstrance, but not for forcing on the Ameers, at the point of the sword, an entire change in their situation in regard to the British government. Lord Ellenborough was for prompt and decisive measures; he deemed it necessary to inflict "some penalty," because without it there would, in his judgment, be "no security" for the future observance by the Ameers of their engagements. What security was gained by the course which he took? He deposed the Ameers and took possession of their country, thus putting their future adherence to treaties quite out of the question; but this was but the clumsy expedient of an unskilful surgeon, who cuts off the limb which he is unable to restore to healthy action. Looking merely to the relations subsisting between the Ameers and the British, it is impossible to deny that the former were in the wrong;

but if the means by which those relations were brought about be remembered, some degree of excuse will be suggested for men who had been coerced, by those whom they had never injured, into a position which they wished to avoid. The same remark will apply to the charge founded on the hostile letters (the authenticity of which is, to say the least, very doubtful), and to the other acts of an unfriendly character which the Ameers were charged with doing or tolerating. They had received gross provocation, and they might not unreasonably expect that remonstrance would be followed by some further period of probation before they were sentenced to descend still lower in the scale of dependency. But this was not granted. The charges were some of them trivial and some unproved, but they were sufficient to support a demand upon the Ameers for the execution of a new treaty inflicting a penalty—for that is the word employed by the governor-general. It was not enough that the British government should be safe, it was deemed requisite that the Ameers should be punished. These princes had been subjected to much injustice—they were naturally dissatisfied, and it was, therefore, fitting that they should suffer more, especially as there was an opportunity for inflicting further injustice without much risk. If the Ameers gave cause for suspicion, it was right to watch their conduct narrowly—it was justifiable to require them to conform to the treaty which they had subscribed—it was lawful even to propose alterations in the treaty; but if they were declined, it was

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neither lawful nor honourable to treat an ally as a conquered enemy, and require submission to any terms which it might be the pleasure of the stronger power to dictate.

The Ameers were blamed for not peremptorily rejecting the treaty, and supporting the rejection by arms. This would certainly have been the more honourable course; but why should honour be expected to find a place in a native government when it had departed from that which had hitherto rested its claim to power in Asia upon its character for good faith? What measure of openness and fair dealing had the Ameers met with at the hands of the power which, within eleven years from the period when it obtained a reluctantly granted permission to use the roads and river of Sinde for commercial purposes, and for these only, had by steps following each other in rapid succession advanced its claim even to the right of disposing of the territory of the Ameers at its pleasure? This is not an exaggerated representation. Sir Charles Napier assumed the right of transferring a portion of the territory of the Ameers of Sinde to the Rajàh of Bhawlpore under orders from the governor-general, and with reference to the provisions of a treaty which the Ameers had never executed. The general's proclamation announcing the transfer bears date the 18th of December, the Ameers did not subscribe the treaty till the 12th of February following. By threats or cajolery, by force or *finesse*, one sacrifice after another had been extorted from the Ameers. At length, at

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the end of the year 1842, the British government, being disembarrassed of all other difficulties, was able to deal very decidedly with the one which remained. It was thought no longer necessary to go through the forms of diplomacy, or to wear even a decent mark of friendship. It sufficed to declare that the British government wanted certain portions of territory for their own objects, and forthwith to take them without reference to the treaty of 1839, though that was the only document which defined the relations of the Ameers and the British government, and slight infractions of that treaty by the Ameers were represented by the other party as sufficient to stamp on those princes the character of the most faithless of men. If a few breaches of commercial regulations, some of which were doubtful, demanded the infliction of a penalty, what punishment was due to the seizure of a province in violation of treaty? The rulers of Sinde were guilty of the former offence, and lost a kingdom: the British government committed the latter, and gained one. Affairs had indeed been for some time approaching a point where it was inevitable that disguise on both sides should be abandoned; it was maintained by one party as long as was practicable, by the other as long as was necessary. The British in the earlier of their proceedings had employed both cunning and force. They were now in a condition to rely solely on force, and accordingly they dispensed with the less dignified means, by the use of which they had won their first steps. The situation of the Ameers was

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different. They could not afford to discard the use of temporizing, and accordingly they clung fast to it. There is this apology for them; they were acting in self-defence. This at no time could be said of their opponents; they were throughout acting aggressively. The contest on their part was an unrighteous one, and their triumph is felt by their countrymen to be almost as great a source of shame as would have been their defeat.

The case properly rests on the grounds which have already been adverted to, but in the laboured defence of the governor-general there are passages of wider and less special application, which claim some remark. They are those in which the situation of the Ameers, in regard to their subjects, the character of their government, and the moral and social consequences of their dethronement, are referred to. "Foreigners in Sinde," writes his lordship, "they had only held their power by the sword, and by the sword they have lost it. Their position was widely different from that of a native prince, succeeding a long line of ancestors, the object of the hereditary affection and obedience of his subjects. They had no claim to consideration on the ground of ancient possession or of national prejudice." The argument intended to be included in the word "foreigner" obviously bears just as much against those who displaced the Ameers, as against the princes themselves, if not more strongly; and though it be true that they held their power only by the sword, the British, according to the statement under examina-

tion, have no better tenure. They struck the sword out of the hand of the Ameers, and took it themselves; another party, if strong enough, may wrest it from them, and thus the question is reduced to one of mere force. The "position of the Ameers," it is said, "was widely different from that of a prince succeeding a long line of ancestors, the object of the hereditary affection and obedience of his subjects; they had no claim to consideration on the ground of ancient possession, or national prejudice." The length of the possession of their family was about sixty years; our own standing in India is not so much more as to warrant us in despising a sixty years' possession. As to the case of a prince supposed not only to be derived from a long line of ancestors, but to be "the object of the hereditary affection and obedience of his subjects," it may confidently be asked, where, within the wide expanse of India, and the adjacent countries, is such a prince to be found? For the most part, the "obedience" rendered to native princes is very imperfect; but the Eastern potentate enjoying the "affection" of his subjects has still to be sought for. This imaginary case of a prince of ancient descent, and of such a character as shall command not only obedience but affection, is introduced merely for the purpose of a contrast with the Ameers, who, it is immediately added, had no claim to commendation "arising out of the goodness of their government." This may readily be admitted; it may be at once allowed that the Ameers were not above the ordinary run of native princes—

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that they were even very bad specimens of a very bad class; but why, it may yet be asked, were they selected for punishment by confiscation and imprisonment, while other royal profligates are permitted without restraint to cover with desolation some of the fairest portions of Asia? "To take advantage of the crime they had committed, to overthrow their power," it is said, "was a duty to the people they had so long misgoverned;" but how came it that the claims of the people of Sinde pressed so much more strongly upon the British government than those of other countries, with whom that government had been much longer connected? There was an opportunity, it seems—the Ameers had committed a crime. That crime consisted in a desire to keep to themselves the country from whose roads and river they had, down to the year 1832, excluded strangers at their pleasure; the country in which, down to the year 1839, they had exercised sovereign rule; the country in which they still retained the name, and many of the functions of sovereignty, some of which, together with a large portion of territory, they were about to be deprived of. This was the crime of the Ameers; it was the crime of a man who resists an unlawful attempt to despoil him of his property. In all our disputes with these princes we had been the aggressors; we had dealt with their country as though it had been our own, and to suppose that they should regard us with friendly feelings was impossible. All that has been said of the bad government of the Ameers, and of

the benefit likely to result from its transfer, is the result of after-thought. If a regard for the people of Sinde were the motive of our proceedings, why was it not avowed from the first? It was, surely, a more honourable one than some which could not fail to be imputed. Did we or did we not invade Sinde for the deliverance of its people from tyranny? If we did, why did we so long decline the honour attached to our chivalric movement? If we did not, how can we now pretend to any merit on such ground? The government of the Ameers was bad; so is that of every other native state. The people will be more prosperous and more safe under British rule, than under that of their native governors; so would the people of every other state of India. Are we, therefore, prepared to take possession of every state subject to native rule? The case, in truth, stands thus:—The British were anxious for the possession of Sinde; they were strong enough to take it, and the people, it may be admitted, will be benefited by the change. But the motive which led to that change was ambition, not philanthropy; cupidity, not benevolence; and it is sheer hypocrisy to declaim on the vices of the Ameers, and the wrongs of their people, while, if our own interest had not furnished a spur to interference, the rulers might, for us, have revelled in their vices, and the people bent under their wrongs until the end of time.

Thus, too, of the vapouring display which has been made of the advantages of opening the Indus. It need not be denied that some degree of benefit

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to commerce may follow, but how has it been secured? By a series of political crimes; and if the actors in them are to be justified by the results, then may we do evil that good may come. Men have ceased, in a great degree, from attempting to propagate religious truth by violence; and there are now few who will not admit the wickedness of such attempts. But it seems that it is quite lawful to open up new sources of trade by such means, and that when there may appear any chance of extending commercial operations, the sword may properly be employed to clear the way. Thus the errors and crimes of one age disappear in the next, but too often only to be replaced by others equally great, and equally dangerous.

And with such vindication of the policy of a British governor-general, in dealing with an ally, as the letter of Lord Ellenborough affords, closes, for the present, the history of Sinde, henceforth a British province.

Another subject, not unfraught with anxiety, had divided with Sinde the attention of the British government during the year in which that country was added to the British possessions. This was the state of the dominions of the House of Scindia, where events occurred which threatened to light up again the flames of war but just extinguished in Affghanistan, and the embers of which yet glowed in Sinde. Dowlut Rao Scindia, with whom, it will be recollected, treaties had been concluded, under the administrations of the Marquis Wellesley and the

Marquis of Hastings,* died in the year 1827, leaving no son, and having adopted none. His widow, the daughter of the notorious Shirzee Rao Ghatgay,† thereupon assumed the exercise of the sovereign authority, and meditated introducing a member of her own family as her successor. But this design she was forced to abandon; and, ultimately, she adopted a boy of the Scindia family, who was declared to be the nearest relation of the deceased chief, eligible for adoption, with reference to age. The youth of the new chief secured to the ambitious widow of the deceased one the continued exercise of power for some years; but on the former attaining the age of seventeen, he aspired to the actual possession of the authority which he had been selected to inherit. After a struggle, he succeeded; and, in 1833, was proclaimed sovereign, the regent retiring, after some months of hesitation, to Agra. Years were required to settle the amount of a pension to be assigned to her, and the provision of a place for her residence; and these points were scarcely arranged, when, in 1841, the chief was attacked by sickness, of which he sustained repeated shocks, until the 7th of February, 1843, when he A.D. 1843. died, childless, and without having made any arrangement for the succession by recourse to the ceremony of adoption. His widow, who was under thirteen years of age, adopted, with the concurrence of the influential persons and powerful officers of the

* See vol. iii. pp. 359, 379, and vol. iv. p. 452.

† See vol. iii. pp. 492—495.

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court, a boy, named Bhageerut Rao, reputed to be the nearest relative to the deceased Maharajah, and he was forthwith seated on the guddee, with the usual ceremonies.

The Maharajah was about eight years old. His youth, therefore, rendered imperative some special provision for the discharge of the active duties of sovereignty; and the Maharanee, having little advantage, in point of age, over her adopted son, it was obvious that her hands were not those in which the requisite power should be placed. The British resident, Colonel Spiers, supported the pretensions of Mama Sahib, the maternal uncle of the deceased chief, and the governor-general acquiesced in the opinion of the resident. Mama Sahib had enemies and rivals; in an Oriental court every man, intent solely on his own advancement, is an enemy to every other man whose success may impede it. But the influence of the British resident prevailed. Mama Sahib was appointed regent, and on the day on which the Maharajah was enthroned, was invested with a dress indicative of his accession to the office.

Thus far the views and wishes of the British government were realized. But from the period when Mama Sahib entered upon the exercise of his functions, he found himself counteracted by sinister influence. A woman named Nurungee, whose power over the mind of the Ranee appears to have been great, exercised it in hostility to the regent. She was removed, but the effects of her evil counsel

did not cease with her presence. A more serious evil was the state of the army, more especially of a brigade of infantry, consisting of three battalions. One of the three, commanded by a person named Ishooree Singh, had committed great excesses during a march to Malwa. This had occurred before the death of the late Maharajah; and, on the representations of the British resident, orders had been dispatched for the recall of Ishooree Singh, which step was to be followed by his dismissal from the service, and imprisonment. The order required Ishooree Singh to return alone, leaving his battalion where it might be when the order reached him. But this did not correspond with his views; he returned, but brought the battalion with him; and on the arrival of this force in the camp, the disaffection which pervaded it spread to the two other battalions, which formed part of the brigade to which that of Ishooree Singh belonged.

The British resident called for the immediate and signal punishment of the contumacious officer, whose conduct had diffused a mutinous spirit through an entire brigade of the army, and offered the assistance of British troops for the purpose of effecting it. The regent, Mama Sahib, expressed his readiness to act upon the suggestion of the resident, but preferred accomplishing the desired object without the aid of British troops; the introduction of which, he represented, might cause a disturbance extending through the whole army. He believed himself capable of bringing Ishooree Singh and his battalion

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to punishment, but not immediately. A delay of a month or six weeks was necessary, that time being required for issuing pay to the troops—a process necessary to be performed before they were called upon to act in support of the government. This was communicated to the governor-general, then at Agra, and he was thereupon satisfied that no necessity would arise for the march of troops on Gwalior; a measure which he had previously thought likely to be called for.

For nearly three months after his appointment to office, the regent, Mama Sahib, was thwarted by the Maharanee, and the clique of intriguers by whom she was surrounded. Suddenly and unexA. D. 1843. pectedly, on the 18th of May, the British resident received a message from the Maharanee, intimating a wish that the young Maharajah should contract a matrimonial alliance with the niece of the regent. The next evening was fixed for the performance of the initiatory ceremony of the Teeka, and it accordingly took place. This turn of affairs was sufficiently strange, but it was almost immediately followed by another not less startling. On the 18th of May the current of court favour seemed to flow entirely in the regent's favour, and by the proposed marriage of his niece with the Maharajah his tenure of power appeared to be rendered secure. On the 21st the Maharanee summoned to her presence all the chiefs in camp excepting Mama Sahib, and subsequently dispatched a message to the British resident, complaining of the conduct of the regent, and expressing

a desire for his removal. The resident remonstrated, but in vain; and in a few days Mama Sahib was on his journey from Scindia's camp, which he had been ordered to quit.

Oriental intrigues are rarely explicable, except by the parties engaged in them; and in a majority of instances, perhaps, even they would be unable to give a rational account of their motives and conduct. It would be vain to inquire at length into those of the actors in the extraordinary course of events which raised Mama Sahib apparently to the summit of uncontrollable power only for the purpose of immediately precipitating him headlong into ruin and disgrace. One point, however, is clear, that the British government had little influence. The regent, who enjoyed its support as far, at least, as verbal assistance went, was dismissed with as little ceremony as a menial servant would have been discarded, and this by a faction, headed by a girl whose immature age would in Europe have precluded her from the exercise of any control over the most ordinary matters of business. It appears strange that no effort should have been made to sustain the regent by military aid, such having some months before been tendered to enable him to put down the mutinous battalions. The resident applied for permission, in case of need, to call on the officer commanding at Agra for troops to support the regent, but was refused; the governor-general declaring the sending troops to interfere in the internal disputes of an allied state to be a matter of too much importance

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to justify his delegating to any one the power of so employing them. The letter by which the resident was apprized of this determination concluded with the emphatic declaration, "Under no circumstances does the governor-general desire that a single man be permitted to pass our frontier without his personal direction."*

Troops were refused, but despatches were written. The resident was advised that the British government could not acquiesce in the removal of the Mama Sahib without the assignment of some better reason than the wish of the Maharanee; he was to hold no official intercourse with the successor of the deposed regent without special instructions from the governor-general; and it was authoritatively announced, that "the Maharanee and the chiefs must bear in mind that the frontier of the territories belonging to the British government, and of those of the Gwalior state, being for the most part conterminous," it was "a matter of paramount importance that there should exist in Gwalior a government willing and able to preserve tranquillity along that extended line;"—that "the British government" could "not permit the growing up of a lax system of rule, generating habits of plunder along its frontier;"—that "its duty to its own subjects imperatively" required "that it should interfere effectually to main-

* Letter from secretary to the governor-general, 30th of May, 1843. This letter will be found in "Further Papers respecting Gwalior," presented to both Houses of Parliament, by command of her Majesty, April, 1844, page 35, No. 54.

tain the public peace by all such means as" might "appear best calculated to secure that essential object;"—that "it would be far more satisfactory to adopt the necessary measures in cordial co-operation with the authorities of the Gwalior state," and that it had been hoped "that under the regency of the Mama Sahib this might have been done; but" that "in any case the public peace must be preserved, and" that "the Gwalior state" would "be held responsible for all such interruptions thereof as" might "arise out of the mal-administration of its dominions."* These declarations were well; but the movement of a brigade would have been much more effective. In the East no argument is so convincing as that presented by strong battalions. "I do not think it possible," said the resident, "to restore the Mama Sahib to power by remonstrance alone;"† and beyond all question he thought correctly.

The British resident, in conformity with instructions from his government, prepared to remove from Gwalior for a season. This step appears to have excited in the minds of the Maharanee and her admirers that vague apprehension of evil not uncommon where there is a consciousness that offence has been given, and where every act of the party offended is regarded with suspicion. Inquiries were made as to the cause of the resident's removal; and the hollow professions of regard, always current

* "Further Papers," ut supra, No. 57, pages 38, 39.

† "Further Papers," ut supra, No. 58, page 39.

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in eastern courts, were tendered with great liberality. The representative of the British government was entreated, on behalf of the Maharanee, to consider the Maharajah and herself as his children (albeit her recent conduct had exhibited little of filial obedience); his forgiveness was implored, and that of the governor-general, but the Mama Sahib was not recalled. The resident answered in language less warm than that in which he had been addressed, but designed to have little more meaning; and, this edifying intercourse concluded, he proceeded to Dholepore. There he was informed that it was deemed by the governor-general inexpedient that he should return to Gwalior till some government should be created, "having the appearance of good intention, and giving the promise of stability;" or, until the Maharanee and chiefs should "earnestly call" for his assistance, in forming such a government. The governor-general had been sojourning in the upper provinces, but was now on his return; and the distance by which he was about to be separated from the resident made it obviously inconvenient that, under all circumstances, the latter should wait for instructions. The inconvenience was perceived and noticed; but it was declared that the governor-general deemed the return of the resident to Gwalior to be a measure requiring so much consideration, that except in case of unforeseen emergency, it was not to be adopted, without previously representing the circumstances, and waiting for

orders, having reference to the representation.* These instructions were forwarded from Allahabad on the 27th of June.

The principle of non-intercourse was, it appears, difficult to be adhered to. The Mama Sahib had retired to Seronge, and it was apprehended that some attempt might be made by the ruling parties at Gwalior to seize him there. The calm acquiescence of the British government in the deposal of the Mama Sahib had not tended to raise its character; and the seizure of the ex-regent at Seronge would have completed its humiliation in this respect. The governor-general had declared that he did "not wish to have any concern with the Mama Sahib's proceedings;" and the resident had accordingly been instructed to abstain from taking any notice of that person's residence at Seronge, or any other place. This was on the 30th of June. On the 13th of July, a different tone was adopted. The resident was desired, if he entertained the least apprehension of danger to the Mama Sahib, to address the Maharanee in the language of warning, intimating that the entrance of a single man into the territory of the British government would be considered as an attack upon that government itself, and punished accordingly. The threat was to be enforced by reference "to the conduct recently adopted by the British government towards the Ameers of Sinde, its enemies"—a most unhappy reference, except as to the indication of power—and towards the chiefs

* See "Further Papers," ut supra, No. 68, page 51.

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of Bhawlpore, of Joudpore, and of Jessulmere, its allies.* A copy of this letter was transmitted to the Maharanee, with whom it had been deemed necessary to open communications on matters of state, without the intervention of any minister. This was a complete departure from the principle laid down some months before, that the Maharanee was to have no power, not even that of appointing ministers, but that all authority was to be centered in a responsible regent. The Maharanee, in her answer, denied that any intention existed of attacking the Mama Sahib, and a second representation on the subject received a like reply.

It would be impracticable to give any clear account of the intrigues at Gwalior, except at a length disproportioned to the importance of the subject, and the details, if furnished, would have little interest. The following brief notice may be sufficient:—The person most active in the deposal of the Mama Sahib, and whose influence became predominant after the fall of the regent, was called the Dada Khasjee Walla. An attempt was made to obtain for the Maharanee's father a portion of the power of the state, and it was directed that he should be consulted on all affairs; but the Dada Khasjee Walla represented that great evils were likely to arise from a divided authority; and thereupon he was reinstated in that plenitude of power which he so disinterestedly claimed.†

* See "Further Papers," ut supra, No. 78, pages 57, 58.

† The character of this person may be illustrated by reference

But all real power was, in fact, in the hands of the army. This body comprised above 30,000 men; a number out of all proportion to the demands of such a state as that of Gwalior for defence, and not less to its means of supporting them. These troops were, in some instances, commanded by offi-

to a passage in a letter from Colonel Sleeman, forming No. 106 in "Further Papers." The following extract will be found in page 89:—"I may here be permitted to mention something of the character of the usurping minister; he is considered to be, personally, a great coward, and to owe all his influence to intrigues. * * * When the wife of the late chief, Junkojee, was to be confined, he, the Khasjee, collected several women who expected to be confined about the same time, with a view to substitute a boy, should the princess give birth to a daughter. She gave birth to a daughter, but the birth of a son was announced by the resident to the supreme government, and royal salutes were fired on the occasion. The fact of the child being a daughter was concealed from Scindia himself for ten days, till all the other women had given birth to daughters, and the Khasjee had no longer any hope of being able to substitute a boy. Scindia, as soon as he became acquainted with the truth, sent to the resident, and, with unfeigned sorrow and mortification, made the falsehood known to him. It is generally believed that the Khasjee intended to poison, or otherwise destroy, the father, could he have succeeded in substituting the boy, and he is known to have employed all kinds of supposed sorcerers and charms to make away with him, in the hope that the supreme government would, as in the case of the Baiza Baee, allow his widow to adopt a son, which would secure him a long minority. The mother and daughter both died, and Scindia married the Ranee Tara Baee, a girl now thirteen years of age, who was permitted to adopt the boy, who is now about nine years of age.

"The Khasjee occupies the palace with them, and never ventures outside the door night or day. Whenever danger threatens him, he conceals himself in the most sacred of the female apartments, from which issue the orders by which the state is governed."

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cers of European birth, or of European parentage on one side; but the ordinary relation between officers and men was constantly inverted; the latter assuming the province of command, and punishing their officers at pleasure.*

* The following observations respecting the army of Gwalior occur in Colonel Sleeman's letter above quoted ("Further Papers," No. 106, page 86):—"The great evil with which the court of Gwalior has had to contend, since the death of Dowlut Rao Scindiah, in 1827, has been this concentrated mass of 40,000 soldiers at the capital. They have been often in a state of mutiny, and always in a state of disorder bordering upon it; and, in consequence of these disorders, the life of the Sovereign has always been in danger, while the revenues of the state have, it is said, fallen off since 1833, from ninety-five lacs to sixty-five.

"Since the suppression of the Pindaree system by the Marquis of Hastings, in 1817, and the establishment of our paramount authority in all the surrounding states, this disorderly army has had no employment. Just before that time, a part of it was employed, under Jean Baptiste Felose, in the conquest of surrounding districts. He attacked the Rajah of Kurralee, and seized from him the district of Sabulghur, yielding four lacs of rupees a year. He then attacked and seized upon the oldest of Bundelcund principalities, Chanderee, whose chief, Morepylad, had rejected the offer of our protection, which all the other chiefs of Bundelcund accepted. The chief, subsequently, at our intercession, received an assignment of land to the value of 40,000 rupees; but the district has ever since been in a state of anarchy, very prejudicial to the peace of our conterminous districts. He then seized upon the principality of the Keecheewara chief of Raghogur, yielding a revenue of three lacs of rupees a year, and that of the chief of Bahadurgur, *alias* Easaugurh, yielding two. The chief of Bahadurgur received the small Jagheer of Murcoodungurh as a provision, and the chief of Raghogur got 50,000 rupees a year, at the subsequent intercession of our government. He then seized upon Shedpore, yielding two lacs a year, and gave the prince twenty-five thousand. He then took Gurba Kolah, yielding several lacs. On the termination of the Pindaree war, in 1817, all these acqui-

Somewhat tardily the British government turned its attention to the necessity of interposing by force, if other means should fail, to suppress the disorders which prevailed in Gwalior, and menaced the peace and security of its own dominions. On the 10th of August, the governor-general recorded a minute, containing the following passage:—"The recent change of ministry at Gwalior, effected through the expulsion of the regent, who had been recently nominated with our sanction; the concentration at Gwalior itself of almost the whole army; the removal from that army, with circumstances of violence, of almost all the officers of European or Eurasian* origin; the selection for posts, civil and

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sitions were confirmed and guaranteed to the Gwalior chief, on the principle adopted, of respecting actual possession in the new relations with the native states to which that war gave rise.

"It might be supposed that this army, and its leaders, would never feel very well disposed towards a paramount authority, that has the power, and has manifested the will, to interpose and prevent its indulging in such excursions as these; for, if left alone, they would, in a few years, have seized upon every principality in Bundelcund in the same manner, and their bearing towards us has always been that of men restrained only by their fears.

"The chief and his ministers have often attempted to reduce the numbers of these military establishments, as well with a view to the tranquillity of the country on which they prey, as to economy; but such attempts have ended in their ruin, for they will never allow any corps or establishment to be paid off, or any vacancies in them to remain unfilled; and nothing but the interposition of the paramount power can ever enable the chief to reduce this body to a scale commensurate to his wants in the altered state of his affairs."

* It may be necessary to explain that the word Eurasian is a term applied, somewhat affectedly, to the large class in India who trace their origin to one European parent only.

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military, of persons known to be hostile to our government, and of some whose removal from their appointments had but recently been carried into effect by the late Maharajah, on our representation; all these things, exaggerated as they will be by a people desirous of change, make it desirable that the representations our government may find it necessary to make to the Gwalior Durbar, and our general influence over native states, should be supported by the presence of an army. It may be impossible accurately to calculate upon the future, when its complexion must depend upon troops without discipline, who may soon be without pay, and upon men unscrupulous as to the means by which the objects of their bad ambition may be effected; but the course of events which seems most probable is this, that the inhabitants of the detached territories of the Gwalior state in Malwa, and of the districts adjoining Saugor and Bundelcund, being under no real control, will become the invaders and plunderers of our subjects and allies, and thus compel us to demand from the Gwalior state, a reparation which it will be really unable to afford, and which we must, therefore, in some manner take for ourselves. The measures we may thus adopt with respect to the districts belonging to the Gwalior state in Malwa, and adjoining Saugor, will be most conveniently covered by the union of a considerable force in a camp of exercise upon or near the Jumna." In accordance with the views herein propounded, the commander-in-chief was desired to form his camp

at Cawnpore, on the 15th of October next ensuing, and it was directed that shortly afterwards an army of exercise, consisting of at least twelve battalions of infantry, with a proper complement of cavalry and artillery, should be assembled upon or near the Jumna.

In the meantime anarchy continued to increase, though communications between the Maharanee and the British resident at Dholepore were not suspended. The Maharanee expressed a strong wish for the return of the resident to Gwalior, but the latter, acting under the instructions of his government, refused, except on condition of the Dada Khasjee Walla being not only deprived of authority, but punished by fine and banishment; or what was regarded as a preferable course, surrendered to the British government. A paper, addressed to the Maharanee by the resident, which contained the demand for the punishment or surrender of the Dada, was by that personage intercepted;—he very naturally feeling reluctant that such a proposal should reach the royal ear. When this fact became known to the governor-general, great indignation was expressed at the conduct of the Dada in withholding the communication, which was declared to be "an offence of a most criminal character against the state of Gwalior, amounting to a supersession of the Maharanee's authority, and the transference of all power in an unlawful manner to himself. The governor-general in council," it was added, "will not permit any subject of the state of Gwalior thus to

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supersede the authority of his sovereign." As the British government had authorized its representative to communicate with the Maharanee, disappointment, not unmixed with anger, might be felt at the step taken by the Dada to prevent the transmission of any representation hostile to himself. But it seems rather an exaggerated tone of writing, to designate the act of the Dada as a criminal offence against the state of Gwalior; that state, if it deserved the name, being at the time altogether without any responsible or recognized government. One of the reasons adduced in illustration of this view—that the act amounted to a suspension of the Maharanee's authority—seems perfectly idle. It is true, Dada Khasjee Walla had no right to the power which he had assumed; but it is equally true, that, according to the declared conviction of the British government, neither had the Maharanee any right to the exercise of sovereign authority. It had been solemnly and most justly determined, that her extreme youth rendered her utterly unfit for the charge. She had no authority, but that which, like the Dada, she had usurped. A regent had been appointed, with the sanction of the British government; he had been deposed, and the Maharanee took the power, for which she had been adjudged incompetent. Yet the same government, which had so adjudged, condescended, by its representative, virtually to recognize her usurpation, by holding intercourse with her, as the guardian of the interests of the house of Scindia. Not only so, but in an official paper

issued by that government, the Maharanee is adverted to in a character which the most devoted of her adherents would scarcely have ventured to claim for her. The Dada is spoken of as a subject, and the Maharanee as his sovereign. Now, it is quite clear that the boy Scindia was the sovereign, and that even if the usurpation of the Maharanee were overlooked and submitted to, she could be regarded, at most, only as regent. Strange it is, that after denying her the latter office, she should, without a shadow of claim, have been invested with the higher rank of sovereign.

The governor-general was now preparing to leave the presidency for the purpose of proceeding to the vicinity of the place, where, by negotiation or force, the differences between the British and Mahratta states were about to be determined. But before he departed, he recorded his view of the cause of his journey in a lengthened minute. In this document the rights and obligations of the British government as the paramount power in India within the Sutledj, were adverted to and maintained. The doctrine that in India such a paramount power must exist, and that the British government should be that power, was one which statesmen, both at home and in the East, were slow to learn; but it may be hoped that it is now too deeply seated in the minds of men of all parties to be easily effaced, and Lord Ellenborough was justified in assuming it as the basis of his proposed movements. After some very unnecessary and rather questionable remarks

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on the mode by which our power was acquired, he proceeded to point out the effects of an abandonment of our high position in the following passage, which is quoted, not for its novelty, but its truth:—"Nor while, by receding from that position, we endangered our own existence, should we fail, at the same time, to bring upon all the states now dependent upon us, the most afflicting calamities. The withdrawal of our restraining hand would let loose all the elements of confusion. Redress for the daily occurring grievances of the several states against each other would again be sought, not from the superintending justice of the British government, but from the armed reprisals of the injured; and bad ambition, availing itself of the love of plunder, and of war, which pervades so large a portion of the population of India, would again expose to devastation countries which, under our protection, have enjoyed many of the advantages of peace."

It would appear from the next paragraph of his lordship's minute, that he had little hope of effecting a settlement of the affairs of Gwalior, otherwise than by force, and that at this period (the 1st of November) he contemplated something more than merely menacing the frontiers of the disturbed country; for he continues:—"To maintain, therefore, unimpaired, the position we now hold, is a duty, not to ourselves alone, but to humanity. The adoption of new views of policy, weakness under the name of moderation, and pusillanimity under that of forbearance, would not avert from our own subjects, and

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from our own territories, the evils we let loose upon India; and the only result of false measures would be to remove the scene of a contest, altogether inevitable, from Gwalior to Allahabad, there to be carried on with diminished force, a disheartened army, and a disaffected people."

After noticing the scattered and ill-connected nature of Scindia's territory, and the sources of evil to be found in the existing state of Gwalior, the governor-general proceeded to speak of the Maharajah in a manner which, did not the result refute the belief, might have been understood as intimating an intention to dispossess the youthful prince of the chieftainship to which he had so recently been elevated. The Maharajah, it was stated, was a boy of poor parentage, and altogether uneducated. This latter point was referred to more than once in the minute, from which circumstance it may be inferred that some considerable importance was attached to it; but it is difficult to conjecture upon what grounds. Indian princes are seldom highly educated, and though the attainments of the Maharajah afforded no cause for boasting, it does not seem that he was properly described as altogether uneducated: it was stated on official authority that in Mahratta literature "he had made as much progress as boys of his age generally do:"* it is not often that boys at nine years of age are either great linguists or great philosophers. A further objection

* Letter from Colonel Spiers, resident at Gwalior, to secretary with governor-general, No. 17 in "Further Papers," page 12.

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to the prince, to whose elevation the British government was an assenting party, is found in the allegation that he was not "descended from any one of the family of Scindia who has possessed sovereign authority, but from a remote ancestor of those by whom sovereignty was acquired." Yet in a public notification, issued on the death of Junkogee Rao Scindia, dated at Delhi, the 11th of

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February, in the same year in which the minute under examination was recorded, the following passage is found: "The governor-general has also received information of the adoption, by the widow of the late Maharajah, with the assent of the chiefs and people, of Bhageerut Rao, the person nearest in blood to the late Maharajah."* As the adopted prince had been recognized in February as the nearest in blood, it does not appear how in November any reasonable objection could be taken to him on the ground that his relationship to the robber chiefs who had held dominion was only collateral. Further, that no possible objection to the Maharajah's title might be omitted, it was alleged in the minute, that the prince was "elected by the Zerana and the chiefs of the army for their sole benefit, not for that of the people." This, without doubt, was quite true; but as the election had been confirmed by the British government, it was rather late to object to it. Indeed, the entire passage in which the objections are embodied is almost immediately neutralized by the following: "On the decease of the late

* "Further Papers," No. 10, page 7.

Maharajah, the British government readily acknowledged the succession of the present Maharajah. He was the member of the family of Scindia nearest to the deceased sovereign by blood." Here, then, after the turns and doublings of the preceding sentences, we arrive at a conclusion to which certainly they cannot be regarded as a preparation.

A passing reference to points noticed before—the Maharajah's youth and deficiency of literary acquirement, and the immature age of the Maharanee (with whom, notwithstanding, public business had been discussed)—was followed by a history of the then recent proceedings at Gwalior, concluded by a statement, the perusal of which is not calculated to give a very high impression of the vigour, decision, and unity of purpose with which the British government was at the time administered. After relating the expulsion of the regent, the governor-general thus went on: "The representations made by the British resident were of no effect. The successful rival of the regent became all-powerful. The Christian officers were, with few exceptions, ill-treated and turned out of the camp by the soldiers. Persons who had been deprived of their offices on our representations, were restored. Offices were taken from those who were supposed to be favourable to the maintenance of friendly relations with us; and Gwalior has exhibited to all India the example of a regent, to whom our support had been promised, expelled from the territory he governed, and of a successor, whose acts shew him to

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be hostile to our interests, established in power, in despite of our remonstrances."

Notwithstanding all these proceedings, so insulting to the British government as well as so dangerous to the maintenance of peace, it appears, however, that no intervention with Gwalior might have taken place—the governor-general might have been contented with sullenly withdrawing the British resident to a distance, and leaving the bandit army to pull down and set up its officers at discretion, plunder at will, and continue a terror to all within the territories of the house of Scindia, and to all on its borders, had it not been for the peculiar situation of affairs at the time. It is allowed, indeed, that "under any circumstances, to permit the lengthened continuance of this state of things would have been inconsistent with the honour and interests of our government, and of our allies:—a hostile minister, with a large and ready army, watching us, and threatening us from Gwalior; while plunderers, along the extended frontier, fostered by his sufferance, if not by his protection, would soon destroy all the confidence which has hitherto been placed in our government, and must materially weaken our power." But though honour, and interest, and peace, and character, were thus at stake, the governor-general recorded his opinion that, but for one reason, interference was not imperatively called for. "Still," he says, "under ordinary circumstances, we might perhaps have waited upon time, and have abstained from the immediate adoption of measures of

coercion, expecting the restoration of our influence at Gwalior, from the disunion manifest amongst the chiefs, and the usual vicissitudes of an Indian court. But," it is added, "the events which have recently occurred at Lahore will not permit the resort to a policy suited only to a state of general tranquillity in India." The events referred to were those which occurred subsequently to the death of Runjeet Singh, when in the struggle for peace a series of crimes and excesses were perpetrated worthy of the worst days of the worst governed state of India. From this quarter danger was not unreasonably apprehended, and his lordship's views on the subject were thus expounded: "Within three marches of the Sutledj is an army of 70,000 men, confident in its own strength, proud of its various successes against its neighbours, desirous of war and of plunder, and under no discipline or control. It may be hoped, it may perhaps be expected, that no hostile act on the part of this army will occur to produce a war upon the Sutledj, but it would be unpardonable were we not to take every possible precaution against such an event; and no precaution appears to be more necessary, than that of rendering our rear, and our communications, secure by the re-establishment of a friendly government at Gwalior."

After stating his opinion that it was desirable, with reference to Lahore, that disputes with Gwalior should be brought to a speedy termination, the governor-general on this ground expressed his con-

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viction that the government should confine its claims there to a single point—the expulsion of the Dada Khasjee Walla. This he considered would for a time give to the government an actual predominating influence in Gwalior, and to this he trusted for effecting a reduction of the army, and all other measures that might be desirable. The mode of carrying out these measures he left to be determined by circumstances, and modifications of the views themselves were contemplated as not of improbable occurrence.*

At the time when the minute above quoted was recorded, the state of affairs in Gwalior seemed to be approaching to a crisis. The army was divided into three parties—one friendly to Dada Khasjee Walla, another hostile to him, and a third neutral. The second party obtained possession of the person of the Dada, and it was expected that they would deliver him up to the British resident at Dholepore: this expectation was not fulfilled; but Bappoo Setowlea Deshmook, one of the chiefs most active in the capture, transmitted a communication to the resident, informing him of what had been done, and expressing a hope that his conduct, and that of the chiefs who had acted with him, would be approved of by the British government, with which they were anxious to re-establish the usual good understanding. The resident, in acknowledging this communication, spoke of the con-

* The governor-general's minute will be found in the "Further Papers," No. 115, pp. 99 to 102.

duct of the chiefs in commendatory terms, and concluded by strongly urging that the custody of the Dada should be made over to him. Similar advice was given in two letters addressed, within a few days of each other, by the resident to the Maharanee. The representations contained in these letters were enforced at the Gwalior durbar personally by a moonshee, but in vain. The Maharanee had not, in fact, any control over the person of the Dada, that officer being in the hands of a party opposed to that to whose influence she had yielded herself. For this reason she might have pleaded inability to comply with the demand for his surrender, and have rested her case upon this point. But she, or rather her advisers, for she was but a puppet in their hands, met the requisition in a manner more direct than might have been expected. To the declaration that the delivery of the Dada was the only measure which could arrest the advance of British troops, it was answered that this was the first instance in which a prisoner of the Gwalior state had been demanded by the British government. The moonshee returned to his employer at Dholepore without having gained a single step towards effecting the purpose for which he was sent, and leaving the state of parties in Gwalior at a dead lock, as thus described by a news-writer at the time: "All parties say that there are difficulties on all sides; the Baee (Maharanee) is young and inexperienced; the Goopurra (her father) has not sense sufficient for such a crisis. Both parties are afraid

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of the treachery of each other, and no one is trusted by either party. The Baee's party wish Bappoo Sahib to come to durbar and consult; but it is impossible that the Goopurra can give him confidence that he will not be seized. The Bappoo Sahib wishes to go to durbar and consult, but wishes Colonel Jacob (commander of a brigade) to stand security against treachery. Colonel Jacob is alarmed, as both the Bappoo Sahib and the Goopurra are powerful; there are no means in his power of doing any thing if either of them act treacherously. Under these circumstances, there appears no way of settling differences."

Some further communications passed between the Maharanee and the British resident, but they produced no result. Colonel Spiers, who had been superseded in his functions at the court of Gwalior, on grounds not very intelligible, now quitted Dholepore to proceed to Nagpore, where he had been appointed resident. Shortly after this the two parties most strongly opposed commenced cannonading each other, and continued the operation during parts of two days. The firing ceased in consequence of orders from the Maharanee (though it is stated that it was begun by the troops who adhered to her interests), and the chiefs opposed to the court were invited to a conference. They overcame their fear of treachery, accepted the invitation, and were received with honour. The next step was still more remarkable, for Bappoo Setowlea Deshmook was appointed to the ostensible

administration of public affairs. The proximity of a British military force, and the probability of its advance to the frontier of the Gwalior state, occasioned much alarm there, and the expectation was for a time raised, that to avert such a result the Dada would be given up. But all remained in the state of uncertainty which had so long prevailed. On the 11th of December, when the governor-general arrived at Agra, he immediately resolved on moving forward the assembled troops with as little delay as possible, and on the following day he addressed to the Maharanee a communication expressive of his intentions.* The forward movement of the army

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* "It is a subject of deep regret to me, that your highness should not from the first have adopted the advice which has been offered to you by the resident, Colonel Spiers.

"Your highness will find when it is too late, that the British government always advises an ally in the true spirit of friendship, that it always means what it says, and that it never conveys a threat which it has not at once the intention and the power to execute. Your highness has been informed of the deep interest which your youth and the real difficulties of your position induced me to take personally in your welfare. It would have been most gratifying to me, had your conduct enabled me to look forward to the long continuance of friendship; but your highness has unfortunately listened to other counsels.

"The British government can neither permit the existence, within the territories of Scindia, of an unfriendly government, nor that those territories should be without a government willing and able to maintain order, and to preserve the relations of amity with its neighbours.

"The British government cannot permit any change in the relations between itself and the house of Scindia, which have for forty years contributed to the preservation of the peace of Central India.

"Compelled by the conduct which your highness has been advised to adopt, to look to other means than those of friendly

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had the desired effect. Dada Khasjee Walla was surrendered, and conducted to Agra.

The object thus attained the governor-general had professed to regard as that of chief importance, indeed the only one proper to be pressed on the durbar of Gwalior;* and his lordship had expressed an

remonstrance for the purpose of maintaining those relations in their integrity and spirit, I have now directed the advance of the British armies, and I shall not arrest their movement until I have full security for the future tranquillity of the common frontier of the two states, for the maintenance of order within the territories of Scindia, and for the conducting of the government of those territories in accordance with the long established relations of amity towards the British government.

" I could have wished to have effected these objects in concurrence with your highness; that your highness would have listened to my voice, and that of the respectable chiefs by whom you have been counselled, not to throw away the friendship of the British government; but now, my paramount duty to the subjects of the British government and its allies, whose interests are compromised by misrule in the territories of Scindia, and moreover, my duty to the Maharajah himself, whose person and whose rights, as the successor of Dowlut Rao Scindia, are placed by treaty under the protection of the British government, compel me to resort to other means for the accomplishment of my rightful purpose; and as, in resorting to those means which Providence has placed in my hands for the general welfare of the people of India, I entertain no views inconsistent with the honour and integrity of the Raj of Scindia, but am steadily purposed to maintain both, so I trust that I shall receive the aid of all such as are faithful to their sovereign, and that my intervention may have the happy result of establishing permament good government and order, and of affording new security to the general peace of India, which is the object nearest my heart."

* " It is so desirable to re-establish visibly our influence at Gwalior without delay, by the expulsion of the Dada Khasjee Walla, and thus to have freely disposable the force now assembling at Bundlecund and at Agra, that it would seem to

opinion, that when it should be accomplished, the influence thereby established, would "place within our easy and early reach the attainment of all just objects of policy," including the reduction of the army. The opinion, it will be recollected, had been given not at a time when it was expected that the Dada would be given up to a demand unsupported by a military force, but when the movement of such a force was contemplated, and its assemblage had for the purpose actually taken place. But the facility with which the surrender of the Dada had been yielded under the influence of the terror imposed by the march of the British force seems to have effected a change in the policy of the governor-general, and he determined to employ that terror as an istrument for obtaining those ulterior objects which less than two months before he had been content to leave to the effect of "influence." An intimation to the new resident, dated the 18th of December, thus commences: "The governor-general is gratified by the delivery of the Dada Khasjee Walla to the charge of the British government, as indicating, on the part of her highness and the durbar of Gwalior, a disposition to restore the accustomed relations of friendship between the two states. But her highness is already informed, that the movement of the British armies cannot be arrested until the

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be most prudent to confine to that one point any requisition addressed to the durbar of Gwalior."—Minute, by governor-general, Nov. 1st, 1843, "Further Papers," No. 115, page 101.

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governor-general has full security for the future maintenance of tranquillity upon the common frontier; nor until there shall be established at Gwalior a government willing and able to coerce its own subjects, and to maintain permanently the relations of amity with the British government and its allies." Reference is then made to the expediency of increasing the force maintained in Gwalior under British officers, and to the assignment of districts to be administered under the British government for its support. The increase of the contingent had been noticed in the minute of the

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1st of November; but any attempt to enforce it, except by predominating influence, was then disclaimed. The language held on the subject was as follows: "The increase of the contingent is also on general grounds expedient; the nomination of officers who may be depended on along the frontier is a measure obviously necessary. All these things a *de facto* predominance would ultimately give without a treaty, and no treaty without such influence would secure; but to press now, while men's minds may be in an excited state, the formal concession of all these points at once, and especially the reduction of the army, could hardly fail to lead to the collision it is most our desire and interest to avoid."* Now a different course was to be taken. At a conference held between the governor-general and certain chiefs of the Gwalior state, on the 20th of December, it was required as the only con-

* "Further Papers," page 102.

dition on which the march of the army could be stopped, that a treaty, making provision for these and various other points, should be ratified within three days. Thus, what was formerly proposed to be left to "influence," was to be extorted at the point of the bayonet.

This was not the only change. In the minute of the 1st of November, the right of interference with the Gwalior state had been rested on the claim of the British government, as the paramount authority in India, to maintain the peace and safety of the whole of the country, and on the dangers with which its own frontiers, and those of its allies, were threatened by the disordered state of Scindia's territories. In the following passage these grounds are very distinctly set out:—"In Europe, there is no paramount state. The relations of a paramount power to a dependent state create in India rights and duties altogether different from those which can exist in Europe between states subject to one admitted international law, and controlled in the exercise of their individual power by the general opinion of the great republic of states to which they belong; but, even in Europe, a condition of affairs in any country which manifestly threatened the general repose would not long be suffered to exist; and the combination of the leading powers would effect that which, in India, must be effected by the British government alone. When the existing relations between the state of Gwalior and the British government are considered, it is impossible to view the

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expulsion of the Mama Sahib, and the elevation of the Dada Khasjee Walla to the ministry, otherwise than as an affront of the gravest character offered to the British government by that successful intriguer in the Zenana of Gwalior, and by the disorganized army by which he has been supported. That army of 30,000 men, with a very numerous artillery, under the direction of a person who has obtained, and can only retain, his post in despite of the British government, is within a few marches of the capital of the north-western provinces. The frontiers of the Gwalior state, for a great distance, adjoin ours in the lately disturbed districts of Saugor. They adjoin the territories of the chiefs of Bundelcund, and so scattered are they as to touch the dominions of almost all our allies in Malwa, while they extend beyond the Nerbudda, and even to the Taptee. Everywhere along this line the most cordial and zealous co-operation of the Gwalior authorities is essential to the maintenance of tranquillity; and we know that, under the present minister, the most we can expect is that such co-operation will be coldly withheld, if, indeed, it should not be covertly given to the plunderers we would repress." Such were the original views the governor-general recorded on the right of interference. In the communication made by his lordship on the

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12th of December, to the Maharanee,* it is vaguely stated that the person and rights of the Maharajah, as the successor of Dowlut Rao Scindia, "are

* See note, on page 494.

placed by treaty under the protection of the British government." In a conference between the governor-general and one of the Gwalior chiefs, on the 19th of December, the chief referred to this statement, and it thereupon appeared that the treaty under which the supposed obligation to defend the person and uphold the rights of Scindia's successor had its origin, and on which the right of interference was now grounded, was the treaty of Boorhampoor, concluded in the year 1804. The chief seemed to know very little about this treaty, alleging, that though he had it among his records, he had not referred to it for many years, and did not recollect with accuracy the engagements which it contained. An article which provided for the employment, "on the requisition of the Maharajah," of a subsidiary force, to be stationed near his frontier, being pointed out, the chief asked, admitting such an engagement to exist, what was its practical bearing on the question in hand—whether the interference of the British government was restricted to cases in which the Maharajah might apply for such interference? He was answered, that the case under the spirit of the treaty had arisen from the fact of the Maharajah and the Maharanee, both children, incapable of acting for themselves, having, by the machinations of evil-disposed persons, who had usurped the whole authority of the government, been virtually set aside; that in consequence of the proceedings of those persons, the usual friendly relations of the

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two states had been for the time dissolved, and that the ruin of the Gwalior state must ensue, if the British government, which was almost in the place of guardian of the infant sovereign, did not interfere, to save the person of the Maharajah, and preserve the government of the country.

It is not easy to perceive what advantage was gained to the British cause at this conference, from resting it upon the treaty of Boorhampoor. Under that treaty, so long as it might continue to be in operation, the British government was bound to assist Scindia with a military force of a certain strength, in certain cases, on his request. In the present instance there was no request. The sovereign was incapable of making any, and those who actually exercised authority did not wish for British interference. This difficulty, it will have been seen, occurred to the Gwalior representative, and was met by a train of argument, not very intelligible as applied to justify interference under the treaty, grounded on the youth of the Maharajah and the Maharanee. With regard to the latter, it was said that her "position in the government had been recognized by the British government."* Her position, as the actual administrator of the affairs of the state, had never been formally recognized, and the British resident had withdrawn in consequence of her assumption of the office. Indirectly, indeed, her position had been recognized by holding correspondence with

* Papers respecting Gwalior, ordered by House of Commons to be printed, 12th of March, 1844, page 14.

her on public business—a recognition certainly inconsistent with the very passage under examination, in which the Maharajah and Maharanee are classed together as "children, incapable of acting for themselves."* Then, again, it is said that the British government "stood almost in the place of the guardian of the infant sovereign."† The qualifying word here introduced has a most strange effect. What is the precise situation of one who is almost a guardian? Is the state or the individual sustaining this new and seemingly undefinable character entitled to act as a guardian or not? If entitled, why is the word "almost" employed? If not entitled, what powers are attached to the character of an almost guardian? The truth seems to be, that the questions of the Gwalior deputy were found embarrassing, and that the answer, which rests the interference of the British government neither on necessity nor contract, but on an unsatisfactory combination of the two, was but an expedient to escape the consequences of an injudicious resort to a forgotten treaty. Had the ground taken in the minute of the 1st of November been adhered to, the objection of the Gwalior deputy could not have been taken. The disorganized state of Scindia's territories could not have been denied any more than the danger thence resulting to the adjacent countries. To rest the British policy on the treaty of Boorhampoor was an after-thought, and, in every point of view, an unfortunate one.

* Papers, ut supra. † Ibid.

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On the day after the conference just noticed, another, as already intimated, took place, at which the chief subject of discussion was a proposed meeting between the governor-general and the Maharajah. On the part of the latter, it was suggested that the place of meeting should be the ground then occupied by the British army—that being the spot where former governor-generals had been met on occasion of visiting Gwalior, and any deviation from the established usage would, it was represented, detract from the honour of the Maharajah. The governor-general, however, expressed his determination to advance. The chiefs, thereupon, earnestly entreated that he would reconsider the matter, urging that if the British army passed the Gwalior frontier before the Maharajah had a meeting with him, "it would be a breach of all precedent, and eternally disgrace the Maharajah and the government of Scindia."* The governor-general being unmoved by these representations, the language and manner of the chiefs in pressing them appear to have increased in earnestness—they expressed their belief that "if the British army crossed the frontier before the meeting with the Maharajah, the troops of Gwalior, who were already in a state of the utmost alarm, would believe that the governor-general was coming not as a friend, but with a hostile purpose"—in the language of the paper from which this account is framed, "they implored him (the governor-general) with joined hands to weigh well

* "Further Papers," No. 146, p. 146.

the step he was taking, for that the state of Scindia was in his power to uphold or to destroy; and that, in their opinion, the most serious consequences depended on the passing of the British army across the frontier before the meeting between the governor-general and the Maharajah."*

After some further discussion—or rather some further interchange of prayers on the one side and refusals on the other—the following proposal was made by the governor-general: that the details of a treaty, framed in accordance with the principles laid down at the previous conference, should be drawn up on the following day, the 21st of December; that the Maharajah should meet the governor-general on the 23rd, prepared to ratify such a treaty, and that the chiefs present should guarantee the ratification taking place: upon these conditions, the movement of the army across the river Chumbul was to be delayed till after that day; but if the chiefs failed of redeeming their guarantee, the failure was to be punished by a heavy fine. After some consultation, the chiefs came to the conclusion that the Maharajah could not be brought to the ground at so early a day, and the conference broke up with an apparent understanding that the meeting should take place at Hingona, the first stage beyond the Chumbul, on the 26th.

It was not by Mahratta chiefs only that representations were made of the extreme repugnance felt to the governor-general crossing the Chumbul before an

* "Further Papers," No. 146, p. 147.

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interview had taken place between the Maharajah and himself. Colonel Sleeman, the newly appointed resident, in a letter dated the 21st of December, made the following communication of the impression entertained at Gwalior on the subject. "When I mentioned his lordship's intention to cross the Chumbul on the 22nd, Suchurun Rao, the brother of Ram Rao Phallthea, and Bulwunt Rao, who had come to meet me, expressed a very earnest desire that this might not take place, as it was usual for his highness to pay the first visit to the governor-general on the other side of the river. They seemed to have this very much at heart, and I think it my duty to mention it."* This statement was followed by an account of the ceremonies observed in 1832, when the chief crossed the Chumbul to visit the governor-general, and the latter, on the following day, crossed the river to return the visit. In a letter dated the 22nd of December, Colonel Sleeman, after reporting his having visited the Maharajah and Maharanee, and having announced to them and the assembled chiefs that he had been commanded to repair to the governor-general's camp, and then to return and accompany the young chief, added, "They were exceedingly earnest in the expression of their hope that his lordship would remain to receive the young chief's visit on the other side of the Chumbul."†

On the 24th of December, Colonel Sleeman

* "Further Papers," No. 147, p. 148.

† "Further Papers," No. 148, p. 149.

wrote to the secretary with the governor-general, thus:—"The soldiers talk largely to my people of the army crossing the Chumbul as a hostile movement on the part of our government."* On the 25th, Colonel Sleeman again wrote, in terms which sufficiently described the utter disorganization of the army, the feeling which they entertained in regard to the expected passage of the Chumbul, and the impossibility of averting collision, if British troops were brought into contact with them. Colonel Sleeman had retired from Gwalior, after his interview with the Maharajah and Maharanee, but was expected to return, in order to accompany them to meet the governor-general. The resident, however, was desirous that they should join him at Dhunaila, and these are his reasons:—"I think it to be my duty to state, that I do not think it possible for me to advance further towards Gwalior without collision with the disorderly troops who fill the road from this place to Gwalior." After referring to the danger which would attend any attempt of certain native chiefs to return to Gwalior, and to the absence of all restraint upon the conduct of the soldiers, he continued:—"If I go on, it must be without a single soldier, horse or foot, for it will be impossible to prevent collision if any of them accompany me; and among such a licentious soldiery, without any ostensible commanding officers, I do not think it will be safe for any European or native

* "Further Papers," No. 150, page 150.

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officer to go with me. This is the universal feeling and opinion of my camp. There is a large park of artillery on each side of the river, at this place (Dhunaila), and the troops vauntingly declare that they are come out to resist the further advance of his lordship towards Gwalior, and to make the British force recross the Chumbul."*

Before this time, the important step for good or for evil, the passage of the Chumbul, had been made. From Hingona, the governor-general, on
A.D. 1843. the 25th of December, transmitted to the Maharanee a proclamation, announcing that the British army had entered the territories of Scindia, as a friend bound by treaty to protect his highness's person and maintain his sovereign authority. This was followed, on the 26th, by a communication that the treaty to be framed on the terms formerly laid down was expected to be ratified on the 28th, and that for every day that the ratification might be delayed beyond that date, a fine of fifteen thousand rupees would be inflicted. On the 27th, another proclamation was issued, much in the tone of that which had appeared two days before.

Before this time, the reception which the British visitants were likely to meet was placed beyond doubt. Bappoo Setowlea Deshmook, who had been understood to be friendly to the British interests, and who had proceeded to the British camp, to negotiate the terms of reconciliation, left it on the 25th, three days after the head-quarters,

* "Further Papers," No. 151, page 151.

with the governor-general's camp, had crossed the Chumbul, returned to Gwalior, and undertook the command of a division of the troops destined to oppose the march of the English. On the 26th, the Sumbajee Angria, one of the coadjutors of Bappoo in the work of negotiation, also left the British camp without notice. The 28th, the day fixed for the ratification of the treaty, passed without producing the expected event; and on the 29th, the British army, under Sir Hugh Gough, became suddenly engaged in deadly conflict with that of the Mahrattas.

It is to be regretted that the details of the circumstances under which the engagement was commenced are vague and imperfect. The despatch to the governor-general, reporting the battle and its results, begins thus:—"Your lordship having witnessed the operations of the 29th, and being in possession, from my frequent communications, of my military arrangements for the attack on the Mahratta army in its strong position of Chonda, I do not feel it necessary to enter much into detail either as to the enemy's position or the dispositions I made for attacking it." The respect which is due to the judgment of an experienced and successful general ought not to stifle the avowal of an impression which cannot fail to arise on reading the passage just quoted, that the reason given for not entering much into details is altogether unsatisfactory. Despatches, like that of the commander-in-chief in this instance, are not written for the

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information merely of the individual to whom they are addressed; they are framed for the public eye —they receive official publicity, and they ought to convey all the information which can be given without incurring political inconvenience. It is nothing to the purpose that the governor-general was acquainted with the views or actions here vaguely hinted at; the public had a right to know them, and in a despatch, prepared certainly as much for the general reader as for official perusal, they should have been fully related.

After giving the above reasons for the omission of information, which certainly ought not to have been withheld, the commander-in-chief proceeds to observe, that the position of the enemy at Chonda was particularly well chosen and obstinately defended, and that he never witnessed guns better served, nor a body of infantry apparently more devoted to the protection of their regimental guns, "held by the Mahratta corps as objects of worship." Some brief reference to part of the details previously noted as well known to the governor-general follow. It appears to have been the intention of the commander-in-chief to turn the enemy's left flank by Brigadier Cureton's brigade of cavalry, consisting of her Majesty 16th lancers, under Lieutenant-Colonel Macdowell; the governor-general's body-guard, under Captain Dawkins; the 1st regiment of light cavalry, under Major Crommelin; the 4th irregular cavalry, under Major Oldfield, with Major Lane's and Major Alexander's troops

of horse artillery, under Brigadier Gowan, the whole under the orders of Major-General Sir Joseph Thackwell. With this force, the third brigade of infantry, under Major-General Valiant, was to co-operate, the brigade consisting of her Majesty's 40th, under Major Stopford; 2nd grenadiers, under Lieut.-Colonel Hamilton; and 16th grenadiers, under Lieut.-Colonel Maclaren. The enemy's centre was to have been attacked by Brigadier Stacy's brigade of the 2nd division of infantry, consisting of the 14th native infantry, under Lieut.-Colonel Gairdener; the 31st, under Lieut.-Colonel Weston; and the 43rd light infantry, under Major Nash. To this brigade was attached a light field battery, under Captain Browne, the whole being under the command of Major-General Dennis. This force was to have been supported by Brigadier Wright's brigade, composed of her Majesty's 30th regiment, commanded by Major Bray, and the 56th native infantry, under Major Dick, with a light field battery under Major Sanders. Major-General Littler, commanding the third division of infantry, was to superintend the movements of this column. On the left, with a view of threatening the enemy's right flank, it was proposed to place the 4th brigade of cavalry, under Brigadier Scott, consisting of the 4th light cavalry (lancers), under Major Mactier, and the 10th light cavalry, under Lieutenant-Colonel Pope, with Captain Grant's troop of horse artillery. The country through which this force had to advance is represented as of extreme difficulty, being intersected by deep ravines, and rendered practicable

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only by the unremitting labours of the sappers under Major Smith. The Koharee river was to be passed by the army in three divisions on the morning of the day in which the battle took place; but the whole of the force were in their appointed position, about a mile in front of Maharajpoor, by eight o'clock.

Such is the account given by the commander-in-chief of his intentions and preparations. These had reference to a meditated attack upon the Mahrattas at Chonda. It was not expected that they would be met at Maharajpopr; but on arriving at this place, the British force was made aware of the presence of the enemy, by receiving the fire of their artillery. This was evidently a surprise. The language of the despatch is as follows:—"I found the Mahrattas had occupied this very strong position during the previous night, by seven regiments of infantry with their guns, which they intrenched, each corps having four guns, which opened on our own advances. This obliged me to alter in some measure my disposition."* The alterations were these:—General Littler's column being directly in front of Maharajpoor, was ordered to advance upon it direct, while General Valiant's brigade was to take it in reverse; both being supported by General Dennis's column and the two light field batteries. The details of what followed are very slight; but it appears that her Majesty's 39th, supported by the 56th native in-

* Despatch from commander-in-chief to governor-general, January 4th, 1844.

fantry, drove the enemy in very dashing style from their guns into the village. There a sanguinary conflict ensued; the Mahratta soldiers, after discharging their matchlocks, fighting sword in hand with great courage. General Valiant's brigade, it is stated, displayed equal enthusiasm in the duty assigned to them, that of taking Maharajpoor in reverse, and the capture of twenty-eight guns resulted from this combined movement. The cavalry, under Brigadier Scott, was opposed by a body of the enemy's cavalry on the extreme left; some well-executed charges were made by the 10th, supported by Captain Grant's horse artillery and the 4th lancers; and some guns and two standards were taken in these encounters.

The enemy having been dislodged from Maharajpoor, General Valiant, supported by the third cavalry brigade, moved on the right of the enemy's main portion at Chonda. During his advance, he had to take in succession three strongly intrenched positions, where, in the language of the despatch, the enemy defended their guns with frantic desperation. In these services, her Majesty's 40th were much distinguished. This regiment captured four standards, and two of its commanding officers in succession (Major Stopford and Captain Codrington) were disabled by wounds. By the 2nd grenadiers, two standards were captured; and the 16th grenadiers worthily aided the achievements of this portion of the British force.

The brigade under General Littler, after dis-

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persing the right of the enemy at Maharajpoor, advanced, supported by Captain Grant's troop of horse artillery and the 1st regiment of light cavalry, to attack the main position at Chonda in front. It was carried by a rush of the Queen's 39th, under Major Bray (who was desperately wounded), supported by the Queen's 56th, under Major Dick. Two regimental standards were captured. A small work of four guns on the left of this position, long and obstinately defended by the enemy, was compelled at length to yield to the grenadiers of the Queen's 39th, under Captain Campbell, aided by a wing of the 56th native infantry, under Major Phillips.

The victory was complete, but it was not gained without difficulty, nor without very heavy loss, the killed, wounded, and missing amounting to nearly eight hundred. So strenuous a resistance has rarely been offered by a native army when opposed to a British force, even when the disparity of numbers has been far greater than it was on this occasion.*

* The following officers are honourably mentioned in the official report of the battle:—Major-General Churchill, C.B. (killed); Captain Somerset, grenadier guards (wounded); Lieutenant-Colonel E. Sanders, C. B., engineers (killed); Major Crommelin, C. B., 1st light cavalry (killed); Major-General Sir J. Thackwell, G. C. B.; Major-Generals Dennis and Littler; Brigadier Gowan; Major-General Valiant, K. H.; Brigadiers Scott, Stacy, Cureton, and Wright; Major Smith, of the engineers; Major-General Smith; Major-General Lumley; Lieutenant-Colonel Garden; Major Grant; Major Barr; Major Drummond; Lieutenant-Colonel Burlton; Captain Ramsey; Lieutenant-Colonel Birch; Lieutenant W. Fraser Tytler; Captain Ekins; Lieutenant-Colonel Gough, C. B., her Majesty's 3rd light dragoons; Major Havelock,

The commander-in-chief thus expresses himself on the subject: "I regret to say that our loss has been very severe, infinitely beyond what I calculated upon; indeed I did not do justice to the gallantry of my opponents."

On the same day which gave victory to the British force, under the commander-in-chief, the left wing of the army, under Major-General Grey, defeated a large body of Gwalior troops, and captured their guns, twenty-four in number, a standard, all

C. B., her Majesty's 13th light infantry; Lieutenant Frend, her Majesty's 31st foot (wounded); Captain R. Smith, 28th native infantry; Captain Evans, 26th light infantry; Lieutenant Bagot, 15th native infantry; Captain Sir R. Shakespear, artillery; Captain Curtis, 37th native infantry; Lieutenant Macdonald, 2nd Madras light cavalry; Lieutenant Hayes, 62nd native infantry; Captain Pratt, 16th lancers; Captain Clayton, 4th light cavalry; Lieutenant Pattinson, 16th lancers; Lieutenant Cowell, 3rd light dragoons; Captain Herries, 3rd light dragoons; Lieutenant Renny, engineers; Captain McKie, her Majesty's 3rd Buffs; Lieutenant Sneyd, 57th native infantry; Lieutenant Dowman, her Majesty's 40th foot; Major Bray, her Majesty's 39th (wounded); Major Straubenzee, her Majesty's 39th; Majors Dick and Phillips, 56th native infantry; Major Ryan, her Majesty's 50th; Captain Nixon, her Majesty's 39th; Captain Campbell, her Majesty's 39th; Captain Graves, 16th grenadiers; Lieutenant Croker, her Majesty's 39th; Captain Harris, 70th native infantry; Captains Alcock and Johnston, 46th native infantry; Lieutenant Vaughan, 21st native infantry; Lieutenant-Colonel Maclaren, 16th grenadiers; Lieutenant-Colonel Hamilton, 2nd grenadiers; Major Stopford, Captain Codrington, and Captain Oliver, successively commanding her Majesty's 40th (the first two wounded); Captain Manning, 16th grenadiers; Captain Young, 2nd grenadiers; Lieutenant Nelson, her Majesty's 40th foot; Brigadier Tennant; Brigadier Riley; Superintending-Surgeon Wood; Field-Surgeon Chalmers; Assistant-Surgeon Stephens.

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their ammunition, and some treasure. General Grey had marched from Simmereea to Burka-ka-Serai on the 28th of December, and there learned that the enemy were in position at Antree, seven miles in front of his camp, and intended to make a night attack. On the 29th General Grey made a march of sixteen miles, being desirous of getting through a narrow valley, extending from Himmutghur to Punniar. The enemy, it appeared, marched from Antree early on the same day by a parallel movement, took up a strong position on the heights in the immediate vicinity of the fortified village of Mangore, near Punniar, and commenced firing on the British line of baggage. Some cavalry, under Brigadier Harriott, were detached to oppose them, and a troop of horse artillery, under Captain Brind, took up a position from which they were enabled to return the enemy's fire with precision and effect; but the cavalry were unable to approach the enemy, from the ground being intersected by ravines. About four o'clock in the afternoon, the enemy was observed to have taken up a position on a chain of high hills, four miles to the east of the British camp. Here General Grey determined to attack them, and arrangements for the purpose were made. The attack was commenced by her Majesty's 3rd Buffs, and a company of sappers and miners, who had been detached to take up a position opposite to that occupied by the Mahrattas. It was directed against the centre of the enemy's force, who were driven from height to height in gallant style, with the loss

of their guns. A wing of the 39th native infantry having occupied the crest of a hill commanding the enemy's left, after pouring in a destructive fire, rushed down and captured a battery of two guns. Brigadier Yates, and Major Earle, successively commanding the 39th, were both wounded. An infantry brigade, under Brigadier Anderson, of the Queen's 50th, gave the finishing stroke to the enemy, and captured the guns which had escaped the previous attacks. Her Majesty's 50th regiment, and the 56th and 58th native infantry, seem to have been chiefly concerned in achieving the satisfactory termination of the conflict.*

The natural consequence of the success which had attended the British in the two battles was to bring the Maharanee and her advisers to accept whatever

* The following officers are named by General Grey as honourably distinguished:—Lieutenant-Colonel Clunie, her Majesty's 3rd Buffs; Brigadier Yates and Major Earle, 39th native infantry (both wounded); Brigadier Anderson, her Majesty's 50th (wounded); Major Petit, her Majesty's 50th; Major White, 50th native infantry; Captain Parker, 58th native infantry; Brigadier Biddulph, Major Geddes, Captain Campbell, Lieutenant Tombs, all of the artillery; Major Fitzgerald, 11th cavalry; Brigadier Stubbs, commanding in Sipree contingent; Captain Christie, 8th irregular cavalry; Lieutenant-Colonel Parsons, deputy commissary-general; Lieutenant Cunningham, field engineer; Lieutenant Maxwell, sappers; Captain G. Reid, assistant quartermaster-general; Captain Guyon, deputy assistant adjutant-general; Captain Tudor, her Majesty's 50th; Brigadier Campbell; Major Mainwaring, and Captain C. Mainwaring. General Grey's despatch bears date the 30th of December, the day after the battle. The despatch of the commander-in-chief is dated the 4th of January, six days after the conflict; the cause of the delay is not explained.

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terms it might please the victors to dictate. On the 30th of December the Maharajah and Maharanee were admitted to a conference with the governor-general, and after an interchange of the usual expressions of civility, and of much more, scarcely less usual on such occasions, and certainly not more sincere, the British authorities, in conjunction with the native chiefs in attendance on the Maharajah and Maharanee, adopted the following propositions to meet the existing state of circumstances—the Maharajah to issue an order to all his officers and servants to desist from hostilities against the British armies; the governor-general to issue a similar order, forbidding hostilities on the part of the British troops, unless they should be attacked; the Maharajah to issue orders for furnishing all necessary supplies to the British armies, on the requisition of the commissary-general; these orders of the Maharajah to be sent by Huzzooreeahs, in such manner as distinctly to make known his highness's determination to have them observed; the Maharajah to send Huzzooreeahs, with a safe conduct, with the messengers dispatched by the British commander-in-chief to the army in Bundelcund; to prevent collision, no Gwalior troops to be allowed to come within three miles of any position taken up by the British armies; the British armies to advance to the immediate vicinity

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of Gwalior on the 2nd of January, and the governor-general to take the Maharajah with him; the British government to give compensation to such cultivators and others in the Gwalior states, as might

have been exposed to loss by the passage of its armies, and the amount of the compensation to be paid under arrangements to be made at a future time by Scindia. Lastly, the Maharajah was to issue the following proclamation, and to cause it to have the quickest and widest circulation possible:—"The British armies have entered the Gwalior territories to protect the person of the Maharajah, to support his just authority, and to establish a government capable of maintaining the accustomed relations of friendship between the two states. All faithful subjects of Scindia are therefore directed to give them every aid in their power. No person will be injured by the British armies. All supplies furnished will be paid for. All damage unintentionally done will be compensated."*

These arrangements were followed by others for settling anew the relations between the British government and that of Scindia, the dispersion of the mutinous army, and the future mode of conducting the affairs of the government. On the 5th January, A. D. 1844. the governor-general and the army having advanced to Gwalior, the chief points of a new treaty were agreed upon, at a conference held with some of the chiefs. The mode adopted for carrying on the government was very different from that which had formerly been deemed the most advantageous. Instead of vesting it in a single person, and thus securing an undivided responsibility, it was committed to a council, the president to be the prin-

* "Further Papers," No. 164, page 170.

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cipal agent in the conduct of affairs, and the medium of communication with the British resident. The disbandment of the army was effected much more quietly than had been anticipated. The task was commenced on the 9th of January, and completed by the 17th without a single disturbance. Part of the men were enlisted in the new contingent force; the remainder received a gratuity of three months' pay, and departed to seek their future livelihood elsewhere.

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The new treaty was ratified by the governor-general on the 13th of January. It consisted of twelve articles. The first recognized and confirmed all existing treaties and engagements, except as to points where alterations might be made by the new one. In the enumeration of the treaties understood to be in force, that of Boorhampoor was included. By the second article it was provided that the contingent force stationed in the territories of Scindia should be increased, and that permanent provision should be made for defraying its charge by the assignment of the revenue of certain districts enumerated in a schedule attached to the treaty, such revenue to be in addition to any source of income previously set apart for the purpose. By the third article, if, after defraying the charges of the contingent force, and of the civil administration of the districts assigned for its support, there should be any surplus beyond the amount of eighteen lacs of Company's rupees, the surplus in excess of such sum was to be paid over to the Maharajah; but if the

revenues and receipts should fall short of eighteen lacs, the Maharajah was to make up the deficiency. The fourth article declared, that for the better securing of the due payment of the revenues of the assigned districts, and for the better preserving of good order therein, the civil administration of those districts should be conducted by the British government in the same manner as in the districts of which the revenues had been previously assigned. The fifth article introduced a subject of standing importance and interest in India—that of debt. The claims of the British government on that of Gwalior, arising from a variety of sources, were taken (subject to future examination) at twenty-six lacs of rupees, and it was agreed that payment of that sum should be made within fourteen days from the date of the treaty. In default, the revenues of further districts, enumerated in another schedule attached to the treaty, were to be made over to the British government, to be held by it until such time as its claim on Scindia's government should be liquidated, together with interest at the rate of five per cent. per annum. In regard to this subject, the governor-general observed, in the despatch announcing the conclusion of the treaty, "Schedule B was from the first a mere form, as the durbar declared their intention of paying the amount demanded from them, and have now intimated to the resident that it is ready for him to send for when he pleases." The sixth article commenced with another recognition of the treaty of Boorhampoor, though it was not dis-

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tinctly named, and then proceeded to limit the amount of military force to be maintained by the Maharajah, and to provide for the reduction of the army to the prescribed number. The seventh provided for the discharge of the arrears of pay to the disbanded troops, and for bestowing a gratuity on those not re-enlisted. The two articles ran thus:—"And whereas the British government is bound by treaty to protect the person of his highness the Maharajah, his heirs and successors, and to protect his highness's dominions from foreign invasion, and to quell serious disturbances therein; and the army now maintained by his highness is of unnecessary amount, embarrassing to his highness's government, and the cause of disquietude to neighbouring states: it is therefore further agreed, that the military force of all arms hereafter to be maintained by his highness, exclusive of the contingent above provided for, shall at no time exceed nine thousand men, of whom not more than three thousand shall be infantry, with twelve field guns, two hundred gunners, with twenty other guns; and his highness the Maharajah engages to take immediate measures for the reduction of his army within the number above specified, and the British government engages, on its part, to assist his highness therein, should such aid appear to be required. It is further agreed, that his highness will discharge all pay due to the troops disbanded, and also give a gratuity of three months' pay to such of the officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates of the corps disbanded, as may not be re-enlisted in

the contingent, or in any new corps formed by his highness." The operation of reduction was in progress when the treaty was ratified, and, as already mentioned, was completed four days afterwards. Next came that important part of the treaty which was to regulate the future government of the Gwalior state. By the eighth article it was determined that the minority of the infant prince should be considered to terminate on his attaining the full age of eighteen years, and not sooner; and a day was fixed as that on which such age would be attained, namely, the 19th of January, 1853. It was then declared to have been agreed, that during the prince's minority the persons intrusted with the administration of the government should act upon the advice of the British resident, and the words which followed gave to this provision as wide a range as could possibly be desired. Those exercising the functions of government were to act upon the British resident's advice, not only generally or on important points, but "in all matters wherein such advice shall be offered." This, it will be seen, virtually transferred the government to the British resident, and converted the parties having place in the body dignified by the high-sounding name of the Council of Regency into mere ministerial dependents. No change was to be made in "the persons intrusted with the administration," as they are properly designated in this article, though more pompously referred to in the next as "the Council of Regency," without the consent of the British resident," acting

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under the express authority of the governor-general." Considering the importance of the point to which it relates, the latter part of this article would seem not to be characterized by all the precision desirable. It might become a question, what was meant by the "express authority of the governor-general." The ninth article nominated the persons who were to form the "Council of Regency." The tenth assigned to the Maharanee an annual allowance of three lacs, to be at her own sole disposal. The eleventh pledged the British government, "as heretofore," to "exert its influence and good offices for maintaining the just territorial rights of the Maharajah and the subjects of the state of Scindia at present existing in the neighbouring and other native states." The twelfth and last article recorded the settling and ratification of the treaty.

On the day on which the treaty was ratified a notification of the fact was published by order of the governor-general, announcing, as the result of the battles which had been fought, the secure establishment of British supremacy. This boast might perhaps have been spared. The maintenance to the British government of the position to which it may justly aspire, of being the paramount power in India, should always be kept in view by those intrusted with the administration of that government; there may be occasions on which it is expedient publicly to assert the claim to it; but there seems some deficiency of generous feeling in parading it before an humbled enemy at a time when friendly relations

had just been restored by the conclusion of a new treaty. Another allusion seems on the same ground exceptionable. "The governor-general," it was said, "successful in the field, has adhered to the principles upon which the intervention of the British government, in the affairs of the Gwalior state, was from the first based."* It could not be necessary at such a moment to remind the people of Gwalior that the British had been "successful in the field." Exception on other ground might also be taken to this passage: success in the field is claimed not for the British government but for the governor-general, who, it is to be presumed, did not interfere with the duties of the commander-in-chief, who was himself present for the purpose of conducting the military operations. The 18th of January brought forth a proclamation, which does not seem directed to any object which might not be supposed to be effected by the notification of the 13th. The issue of these papers, indeed, after the conclusion of the treaty, and the recognition of a government established under that treaty, appears to have had no other purpose but to give expression to a feeling of triumph, and to gratify a desire of treating the Gwalior state as a conquered country.† Judging from the language

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* "Papers," p. 21.

† To enable the reader to judge on this point for himself, both papers are subjoined:—

"*Notification of the Governor-General.*

"Camp Gwalior, 13 January, 1844.

"The evil advice of ill-disposed persons, considering only their own interests, and not the good of the Gwalior state, and the

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officially held on the subject, it seems to have been thought an act of extraordinary lenity that the resolution of the Gwalior army, over-confident in its strength, to endeavour to preserve the advantages it derived from its power over the government of Scindiah, have led to two battles between the British forces and those of Gwalior, deeply to be lamented on account of the loss of brave men mutually sustained, but having for their result the secure establishment of British supremacy.

"The governor-general, successful in the field, has adhered to principles upon which the intervention of the British government in the affairs of the Gwalior state was, from the first, based. He has only used the power which victory has placed in his hands to carry into effect the necessary measures for securing the future tranquillity of the common frontier of the two states, for establishing the just authority of the Maharajah's government, and for providing for the proper exercise of that authority during his highness's minority.

"A treaty, calculated to effect these legitimate objects, and confirming former treaties, has this day been signed by the British plenipotentiaries and the Council of Regency, and ratified by the governor-general and his highness the Maharajah Jyajee Rao Scindiah.

"The accustomed friendly relations between the British government and the Gwalior state are now restored, and the British armies will immediately return to their own provinces.

"By order, &c. F. CURRIE,

"Secretary to Government of India, with the Governor-General."

"*Proclamation by the Governor-General.*

"Camp Gwalior, 15 January, 1844.

"The governor-general makes known to all the subjects of the Maharajah Jyajee Rao Scindiah, and to all the inhabitants of the territories adjoining those of his highness, that friendship has been re-established between the British government and the Maharajah, and that the British government will receive from his highness sufficient funds wherewith to provide a force for the preservation of good order within his highness's dominions, which dominions, as well as the person and authority of his highness, are under the protection of the British government.

state should have been suffered to exist at all; for it is made matter of boast, in a despatch addressed by the governor-general to the Secret Committee on the subject, that "neither the excitement of victory nor the consciousness of irresistible power has led to the entertainment of views of ambitious aggrandizement."*

On reviewing the strange course of events which commenced at Gwalior early in 1843, and were closed by the treaty concluded at the beginning of the following year, the observer, as far as the native state is concerned, will find little to distinguish the proceedings there from the ordinary routine. A host of male and female intriguers, intent on nothing but circumventing each other, are the regular occupants of an Oriental court; and an ill-paid, mutinous, and threatening army, holding in terror those whom it professes to serve, is by no means an uncommon appendage. But the conduct of the British authorities throughout these series of strange transactions may well strike men's minds as not being distinguished by any remarkable unity of purpose, or any

"The governor-general, therefore, warns all disturbers of the peace, and all such as are disobedient to his highness's just authority, that their misdeeds cannot be permitted, and he exhorts them to abstain from such acts as cannot fail to draw upon them punishment from his highness, and the severest displeasure of the British government.

"By order of the right honourable the governor-general.

"F. CURRIE,

"Secretary to the Government of India, with the Governor-General."

* "Further Papers," No. 140, p. 142.

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very consistent perseverance in prosecuting the purpose entertained for the time, whatever it might be.

The connection between the British government and that of Gwalior was very loose; and it was not easy to define with accuracy what the one might fairly demand, and the other be reasonably expected to yield. But at the time of the decease of Junkojee Rao Scindia there appeared to be a distinct feeling that the British government might expect its views to be consulted as to the selection of a successor, and the mode in which the government was to be carried on. When the time arrived for the enthronement of the youthful prince, he was, with the concurrence of the assembled chiefs, led to the guddee by the British resident; and whatever might have been the actual views of the leading persons at Scindia's durbar, there was every external sign of deference to his opinion, or to that of the government which he represented. It was the suggestion of the governor-general that "it would be most for the benefit of the Gwalior state that the regency should be confined to one person, in whom, during the minority of the Maharajah," might "reside all the authority of the state. It would be," his lordship continued, "for the regent to nominate the ministers, and they would be responsible to him. This arrangement," his lordship added, "evidently the most advantageous to the raj and the family of Scindia for all purposes of internal government, as preserving intact the sovereign authority during the minority of the young Maharajah," was

"at the same time that which" was "most conducive to the maintenance of friendly relations between the raj of Gwalior and the British government, as in all cases of complaint, if any such should arise, against the subjects of the state of Gwalior, the British government would know what individual it should hold responsible for the conduct by which it was aggrieved." It was thus the opinion of the governor-general, that until the adopted prince should be of an age to exercise sovereign authority for himself, the powers of the state should, with reference to the interests of Gwalior, and to those which the governor-general was still more especially bound to promote—the interests of Great Britain—be administered by a single person. This was not all, for he determined who was the most eligible person for the office. On this subject the resident at Gwalior was thus instructed: "Your opinion in favour of the Mama Sahib inclines the governor-general to consider that the Ranee and chiefs and people of Gwalior would do well in selecting him as regent."* After adverting to some circumstances which, in the opinion of the governor-general, tended to recommend the claims of the Mama Sahib, the communication to the resident proceeds thus: "The governor-general would therefore gladly see the regency conferred upon the Mama Sahib. The governor-general cannot doubt that

* It might here be inquired, what was meant by referring to the "people" of Gwalior as having any share in the choice of a ruler. The democratic portion of the Gwalior constitution has not yet, it is believed, been developed.

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the Mama Sahib, sensible of the importance of preserving a good understanding with the British government, and especially of taking, in conjunction with the British resident at the court of Gwalior, all measures which from time to time may appear to be required for the preservation of tranquillity upon our common frontier, would readily avail himself of the advice of the resident, and endeavour thereby to avoid all grounds of difference between the two governments."*

At the durbar of Gwalior these views were not generally entertained. The predominant party there wished either to delay the appointment, and suffer the ministers previously in office to continue to carry on the government, or, if there were to be a regent, to place one of themselves in that important post, the person selected for the office being the Dada Khasjee Walla, who was subsequently the cause of so much mischief. They yielded, however—upon what motives is not very readily traceable, but yield they did, and the Mama Sahib became regent with the avowed countenance and support of that government which holds the balance of power in India. It has been admitted that there would be some difficulty in fixing the precise extent of interference with Gwalior which on such an occasion the British government might claim to exercise. Had the chiefs refused to appoint a regency, there might, in the judgment of some, have been no sufficient call for enforcing

* "Further Papers," No. 11, page 8.

by arms the recommendation of the dominant power, although that recommendation was given with a direct view to the interests of the state of Gwalior, and to the maintenance of peace on its borders. The same opinion may be maintained, with plausibility at least, in reference to two other supposable cases: that the chiefs had refused to deposit the entire power of the state with an individual, and had preferred the plan ultimately adopted by the governor-general, of committing it to a council; or that, although willing that the sovereign power should be exercised by one man, they should have made a choice differing from that of the governor-general. In either of these cases, timid reasoners might have suggested acquiescence, and although it could not have been dissembled, that in recommending that which it was not prepared to enforce, the government of British India had placed itself in a false position, much might have been said upon the danger and injustice of interference. None of these three possible cases, however, actually occurred. The person named by the governor-general was recognized as sole regent, and there can be no question, that from the moment of his having been thus recognized, the British authorities were bound to support him. This was felt at the time, and the language held on behalf of the highest of those authorities to the British resident was the following:—"The governor-general did not acquaint you, that he was prepared to support the authority of the regent,

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without taking, at the same time, the necessary preliminary steps to enable him to give at once the most effectual support, if it should be desired. It is inconvenient that there should be protracted suspense upon this point; and the governor-general is therefore anxious to know, as soon as possible, whether the state of affairs at Gwalior is such as to render it improbable that his immediate aid will become necessary to support the regent's authority."* These were not empty words. The governor-general was at that time certainly prepared to act upon them; for the following passage occurs in a subsequent communication in reply to an intimation that the occurrence of a necessity for interference was not looked for.—"The governor-general, satisfied that no necessity will occur for the march of troops upon Gwalior, to support the regent's authority, will now countermand the several measures he had taken for the purpose of concentrating a preponderating force."†

The wisdom of the act announced in the last quotation may be doubted. It was true that the regent thought that there was no immediate necessity for the employment of British troops, and that, if it could be avoided, it were better not to employ them. The latter opinion might be well founded, but the former ought not to have been received with such a degree of confidence as to lead to the precipitate abandonment of precautions which under

* "Further Papers," No. 21, page 14.

† "Further Papers," No. 24, page 17.

precisely the same state of affairs it had been thought expedient to adopt. It was known that part of the army was mutinous, and that the good feeling of the remainder could not be depended upon; that intrigues in the palace were unceasing and complicated; that there was a strong array of interests and prejudices against the regent; that the Maharanee was not well affected towards him, and that she was surrounded by parties who hated and were anxious to circumvent him; all this was known, and yet within three days after the governor-general had declared himself ready to give "effectual support" to the authority of the regent—that is, support by means of an armed force—he determined to deprive himself of the means of fulfilling his pledge by countermanding the preparations which he had made.*

Up to the time when the orders of countermand were given, no doubt seems to have been entertained as to the propriety of interfering by force, if necessary. But immediately afterwards, the governor-general is found holding language intimating that doubt existed. In a letter to the resident, dated 11th March, after a re-announcement of the want of ability to afford aid, the following passage occurs: "This circumstance adds to the force of the objections which the governor-general would in

* The letter announcing the intention of supporting the authority of the regent was dated the 5th of March, 1843; that intimating the intention to countermand the preparations made for effecting it bears date the 8th of the same month.

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any case have seen to the adoption of any step of a violent nature, of which the effect on the army might be problematical, and which would inevitably produce a feeling of hostility towards the regent on the part of the Maharanee."* His lordship appears to have adhered to this conviction after the deposal of the regent; for it will be remembered that when

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the resident on the 29th of May solicited permission, in case of necessity, to call upon the general officer at Agra for assistance in troops, "to reinstate the Mama, and turn out those who" had "been the principal actors in the late disturbances," it was refused on the ground that the employment of troops to interfere in the internal disputes of an allied state was a matter of too much importance to admit of the power of calling them out being delegated to any one. It might be that, in his lordship's judgment, no force could be furnished by the commanding officer at Agra, of sufficient strength to overawe, or if requisite to overcome, the troops likely to be opposed to them; but this is not the reason assigned to the resident. Indeed, at this time, it seems to have been a question whether the British government should countenance even the advocacy of the claims of the Mama Sahib, or abandon them; and it was not long before the latter course was preferred.† The humbled regent retired

* "Further Papers," No. 26, page 19.

† This is amply illustrated by the correspondence in the "Further Papers." In the following letter from the governor-general to the resident, dated the 3rd of June, though a high tone is assumed, there are indications of wavering:—

from the scene of his temporary greatness; the British resident was even instructed to press his

"Your letter of the 31st ultimo, addressed to the foreign secretary, was delivered to me here last night.

"The foreign secretary is not yet arrived.

"I deeply regret the obstinacy with which the Maharanee insists on the dismissal of the regent.

"That high officer was placed in his present station with the general concurrence of the chiefs. His appointment was represented as giving general satisfaction. The cordial approbation of the appointment by the British government was publicly communicated to the chiefs, as well as to the Maharanee; and all were distinctly informed, that the regent would be deemed the responsible representative of the Gwalior state during the Maharajah's minority, and, as such, supported by the British government.

"Under all these circumstances, it is obviously impossible for the British government to acquiesce in his removal, without the assignment of any reason for such a measure, except the wish of the Maharanee.

"The British government can have no object but the good of the Gwalior state, in preferring one minister, or regent, of Gwalior, to another. To the British government, as to the Maharanee herself, and to the chiefs, it appeared but three months ago that the good of the Gwalior state would be best consulted by placing the Mama Sahib in the station of regent, during the minority of the Maharajah; and nothing has occurred to alter my opinion upon that point.

"The Maharanee and the chiefs must bear in mind, that the frontier of the territories belonging to the British government, and of those of the Gwalior state, being, for the most part, conterminous, it is a matter of paramount importance that there should exist in Gwalior a government willing, and able, to preserve tranquillity along that extended line. The British government cannot permit the growing up of a lax system of rule, generating habits of plunder along its frontier. Its duty to its own subjects imperatively requires that it should interfere effectually to maintain the public peace by all such means as may appear best calculated to secure that essential object. It would be far

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retirement, and all that the government by whom the Mama Sahib had been set up would vouchsafe more satisfactory to adopt the necessary measures in cordial co-operation with the authorities of the Gwalior state; and I hoped that, under the regency of the Mama Sahib, this might have been done; but, in any case, the public peace must be preserved, and the Gwalior state will be held responsible for all such interruptions thereof as may arise out of the mal-administration of its dominions.

"In the event of the Mama Sahib being actually removed from office, and of another person being appointed to perform the functions of regent or minister, you will report the circumstances which may have occurred, and hold no official intercourse with the successor of the Mama Sahib, without specific instructions from me.

"In the event of the Mama Sahib being personally in danger, you will inform the Maharanee and the chiefs, that the recent transactions upon the demise of the Maharajah having, with the general consent of all, placed the Mama Sahib at the head of the Gwalior state, as regent during the minority, the British government must continue to respect the Mama Sahib's high station, and must consider him entitled to its protection."

Two days afterwards (5th June), in a letter from the secretary with the governor-general, to the resident, the regent is fairly thrown over:—

"The governor-general has had under his consideration your letter of the 2nd instant.

"2. The governor-general observes, that the Mama Sahib has, throughout these late transactions, which have terminated in his downfall, manifested a want of that decision and energy which are essential to the chief conduct of affairs in a state like that of Gwalior. Powerful at first, and having reason to suppose he might rely upon a large majority of the officers, and of the army, he used none of his advantages, and gradually allowed to grow up an opinion of his weakness, which has led those originally inclined to his cause, and even those whose interests seemed to be bound up with his, ultimately to sign a paper requiring his dismissal.

"3. The Mama Sahib has probably owed his downfall to the

on his behalf, was a feeble endeavour to secure his personal safety.

very measure upon which he must have most confidently relied for the securing of his power, namely, to the marriage of his niece to the Maharajah, which he, very improperly, managed without communication with you. It is most probable that the Dada Khasjee Walla represented this measure to the Maharanee as intended to lead to the setting aside of her highness, and to the conducting of the government by the Mama Sahib in the Maharajah's name, without allowing to his highness any participation therein. The very sudden change in the position of affairs at Gwalior is so identical, in point of time, with the marriage; and the Dada Khasjee Walla, at first reduced to despair by that event, and thinking only of securing his safety by retiring from Gwalior, was so soon the prime mover of every thing within the palace, that it is no more than a fair conclusion, that, having obtained access to the Maharanee, he so alarmed her by his representation of the effect of the marriage upon her future position, as to induce her highness blindly to aid all his designs.

"4. You have been already instructed to afford personal protection to the Mama Sahib, should he be in need of it; but the governor-general cannot but be sensible of the extreme inconvenience, and even danger, which must attend our giving permanent protection, within the Gwalior state, to a subject of that state, deprived of the office of regent; and whether, at the time of your receiving this letter, the Mama Sahib should be actually under your protection, or in a position of precarious security within the Lushkur, you will represent to him that he will best consult his own interests by retiring from Gwalior, and you will make this representation in such a manner as shall induce him to act upon it. The great heats usually lead you at this season to absent yourself from Gwalior, and the governor-general sees no sufficient reason for your now departing from your usual course.

"5. You will not fail to obtain and transmit the fullest intelligence of all that takes place at Gwalior during your absence."

In fifteen days more (June 20), the deposed regent is spoken of in still more disparaging terms than in the letter of the 5th: a

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The regent, it was represented, had disappointed the hopes which the British government had

renewal of intercourse with Gwalior, and that through the Maharanee, whom it had been previously deemed proper to exclude from power, is suggested.

"The governor-general infers, from your letters of the 15th instant, that the two measures you were instructed to adopt, of discontinuing official intercourse with the Gwalior durbar, and of retiring to Dholepore, have had the desired effect of impressing the Maharanee and the durbar with a sense of the serious displeasure with which their recent conduct had been viewed by the British government.

"2. It would be impossible permanently to adhere to either measure, but they are calculated, by the vague apprehension they must excite, to lead to the adoption of moderate counsels by the party which has succeeded in expelling the Mama Sahib.

"3. The first of the measures will probably have the effect of retaining the durbar vakeel in office, under the impression that he must be a person with whom it will be most agreeable to you to communicate; and through whom, therefore, it will be easier to retain some communication, than through any successor he might receive.

"4. The governor-general is inclined to consider this a point it would be desirable to gain, although certainly the durbar vakeel did not, in the late transactions, exhibit much firmness in his conduct, or any very valuable fidelity to his declared patron the Mama Sahib.

"5. With respect to the Mama Sahib, although the support he received from you on the part of the British government, and the movement of the governor-general to Agra, probably determined his election, still he was from the first thought of by the chiefs, and it may be doubted whether, under any circumstances, he might not have secured his own nomination.

"6. He has proved himself quite unfit to manage either men or women, and a minister of Gwalior must manage both.

"7. With respect to the Maharanee, if she be really fourteen and not nine, as is said in the paper inclosed in your letter,

formed of him—he had manifested deficiency of ability, of firmness, and of prudence. This charge wherein her grievances are detailed, the sort of management required must be very different from that which would be adapted to a child of the earlier age.

"8. It is evident that the Maharanee is allowed to exercise personally a degree of power which makes the management of her the material object. No minister, however appointed, would, without managing her, long retain his station, unless, indeed, she were altogether deprived of authority, and set aside, a measure the governor-general is by no means yet prepared to adopt.

"9. The governor-general has at all times declared that we require nothing from the Gwalior state, except that its territory, and especially its frontier, should be so governed as not to become the source of disturbance to ours. Any form of administering the affairs of the Gwalior state, which may effect this object of frontier tranquillity, will be satisfactory to the British government.

"10. The governor-general is by no means certain that the direct mode of communication with the Maharanee herself, which has been suggested as open to you, and while there is no ostensible minister, may not be that which may practically give you the most beneficial influence over the government.

"11. The governor-general has, on all occasions, expressed the strong personal interest he takes in the welfare and happiness of the Maharanee; and you might put that prominently forward in your communications with her highness, as calculated to give her confidence in the loyalty and sincerity of the advice you may give her.

"12. The governor-general does not know whether you have any means of obtaining accurate information of what passes within the palace, still less whether it would be possible for you to secure the services of any one immediately about the person of the Maharanee, and having any influence over her; but both these things it would be very desirable to accomplish.

"13. It is clear that the slaves and others about the Maharanee have some influence over her, and that indiscreet changes in her personal attendants have gone far towards alienating her mind from the Mama Sahib.

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it might not be difficult to support, but what hope was there of improvement from substituting the authority of the Maharanee and her slave girls in place of that of the regent? It was known that this would bring in the Dada Khasjee Walla, virtually, if not formally, as minister, and he had always been regarded as a dangerous person. Further, if the British government were to retain a shadow of influence or respect, could it submit calmly and unresistingly to witness the overthrow of the regent, whose elevation it had recommended, and whom alone it recognized as the ruler of the Gwalior state during the minority of the prince? These reasons for upholding the Mama Sahib, notwithstanding he had in some degree failed to satisfy

"14. The governor-general's impression is, that the Maharanee is a very sensitive, and somewhat impetuous, girl, but that she is by no means without a good disposition; and that, with her character, any thing may be made of her, according to the manner in which she is approached and treated. In any case, the governor-general would wish you to proceed upon this supposition, until you have reason to consider it incorrect.

"15. The explanation you have given of your retirement to Dholepore enables you to terminate it at any time at which you may deem it expedient to return to Gwalior; but the governor-general wishes that no measure adopted by you should have the appearance of suddenness, of precipitation, and of change of purpose, without adequate cause."

This letter contrasts strangely with a passage in one from the same writer to the resident, dated the 11th of March:—"When his lordship first advised, and subsequently approved the nomination of the Mama Sahib as regent, he did not intend to advise or approve only the selection of the Mama Sahib, under the authority of the Maharanee, and liable to be controlled by the intrigues of slave girls."

the expectations which had been entertained of his talents and judgment, were obvious enough; but they seem either not to have occurred, or to have been disregarded.

Like the regent, the British resident withdrew from Gwalior, and this step, as it would seem from certain parts of the correspondence, was intended as an intimation of the displeasure of the government which he represented. According to this view, it was deemed expedient to afford a sullen expression of offended dignity, in a case where it was either imprudent or impracticable to do more; but, strangely enough, it was thought advisable to soften this expression as much as possible. In the instructions given to the resident on the subject, it is observed:—"The great heats usually lead you at this season to absent yourself from Gwalior, and the governor-general sees no sufficient reason for your now departing from your usual course." It does not, however, seem that such was the "usual course" at that season; for in a letter from the resident, bearing date ten days later than the above instructions, the writer refers to a conversation which he had held with the durbar vakeel, in which the latter person referred to a prevalent belief, that the resident was about to proceed to Dholepore. The resident answered, that it was his intention to go there "for change of air." The vakeel replied, "that this was not the season at which" the resident "usually moved." His remark was not met by a denial, but by an assent to the fact. "I said no; but that, as I had nothing

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particular to engage my attention at present, I should go there (to Dholepore) when I could obtain carriage." The vakeel made some further observations, which were thus met: "I requested the vakeel to inform the Maharanee, that she was aware as well as he was, that I was in the habit of moving about occasionally, and that she must look upon my going to Dholepore on this occasion as nothing more than what I had stated, and that she must not think that it was because I was offended with her that I went there."*

Indeed, the proceedings connected with this movement to Dholepore seem to have been characterized by the same indecision which, throughout the year 1843, was constantly displayed in regard to the affairs of the state of Scindia. It might be argued, that it was desirable to lull the durbar of Gwalior into security till the time arrived for acting with greater decision. A reference to the language held on the subject will shew that this was not intended. The departure of the regent for Dholepore was meant to be an indication of offence: and it is made matter for boast that it was so understood; yet pains were taken so to manage it, as to divest it as much as possible of the appearance which it was thought desirable it should present.

Similar inconsistency seems to have been displayed in regard to the question of holding correspondence with those who succeeded to power upon the fall of the Mama Sahib. The British resident

* "Further Papers," No. 64, page 43.

had been instructed to discontinue official intercourse with the Gwalior durbar. The durbar vakeel, however, on a visit to the resident, which was understood to be the last that would be received, "remarked, as the Ranee had not appointed any minister to succeed the Mama Sahib, that he thought the official intercourse should not have been interrupted; that the Ranee herself held durbars daily, and conducted the affairs of the state;"* and therefore it was determined to continue the intercourse, though the Maharanee had been declared utterly incompetent, on account of her youth, for the exercise of political authority. Whether it were better to maintain some correspondence with the Gwalior durbar or abstain, may be a question open to discussion; but both courses could not be right; and the vacillation displayed in this, as in other instances, seems to indicate that no well-considered plan had been adopted for the management of the British relations with Gwalior.

At last, as has been seen, the governor-general assumed a warlike attitude, and directed the assemblage of an armament: and now the tone of instruction to the resident was changed. The Dada Khasjeé Walla and other offending parties were to be punished, the army reformed, and peace and good order established. Yet the Maharanee was still to play an important part. The resident was informed that "the governor-general in council" was "strongly of opinion that all important measures of the govern-

* "Further Papers," No. 64, p. 44.

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ment should be adopted after communication with" him (the resident), and that he should himself "maintain constant personal intercourse with the Maharanee, and hereafter with the Maharajah. No chief whatever," it was added, "should be suffered to stand between the British minister and the natural head of the Gwalior state;"* the natural head at this time being a girl of about thrirteen years of age, who, five months before the above was written, had been declared unfit to exercise authority, even through the agency of a responsible minister.

Resort to force having been determined upon, it became necessary to fix the grounds of the determination. It has been already shewn that the armed interference contemplated was rested on the fact of the British government having for many years assumed the rights, and performed the obligations, of the paramount power of India. It has been shewn, too, that at the time when this ground was taken as the basis of action, it was proposed to demand from the Gwalior durbar nothing but the expulsion of the Dada Khasjee Walla; that all other points, numerous and pressing as some of them might be, were to be left to time and influence. Further, it has been shewn that in less than two months the ground of interference was shifted, and a treaty raked up for justification of the change; and also, that instead of confining the demands of the British government to one single point, a variety of demands were raised, and embodied in a new treaty, the adoption of which

* "Further Papers," No. 90, p. 70.

was carried by the sword. To enforce those demands, the governor-general with an army approached the bank of the Chumbul. He was warned, both by native and European authorities, that to cross that river would be regarded as an act of hostility, and would precipitate a state of things which he professed to be anxious to avoid. He had often hesitated in the course of his policy towards Gwalior, but in this instance he was determined. He crossed the river; this act put an end to the differences previously existing between the conflicting factions, and united all against an enemy who had entered their country. As it is impossible to know what would have been the result of a contrary course, it is impossible to decide positively that the course taken was either right or wrong, but the result certainly fulfilled the predictions which had been made as to the effect of the movement upon the army of Gwalior. This much, however, might have been expected—that the fearfully important step having been taken, it would at least have been followed up with vigour; that all the consequences depending upon it having been incurred, there would have been no hesitation in pushing onward.

This reasonable expectation was not fulfilled. The British loitered at Hingona, when no one could hope for any thing but from an appeal to arms, and this enabled the enemy to complete measures for attacking the advancing force to a disadvantage. Before crossing the Chumbul there was abundant

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ground for pause—after that step had been taken, there was nothing to be looked for except what could be won at the sword's point. Battle ensued, and the British, though they had trifled with their advantages, were victorious. It would almost seem, from a consideration of the circumstances of the engagement, that the possibility of being forced to combat was scarcely contemplated on the part of the British. Up to the moment when awakened from the trance of security by the discharge of artillery it would appear as though an expectation, and a confident one, was entertained that the march to Gwalior would be a bloodless one. Arrangements were made for opposing the Mahratta army, but it seems hardly to have been expected that they would give any trouble. This delusion was not an unfitting termination of the series of half-timorous, half-violent measures which had preceded it.*

The battle won, negotiation followed, and as its basis came the treaty of Boorhampoor. This was the treaty of alliance and mutual defence concluded by Captain Malcolm, under the instructions of Sir Arthur Wellesley, in 1804, during the administration of the Marquis Wellesley. The treaty was disregarded by Scindia and disapproved by the Marquis Cornwallis and Sir George Barlow. In consequence, a new treaty of amity and alliance was concluded at Mustafapoor, in 1805, which, with some alterations,

* The fact of the British being taken by surprise is attested by the presence on the field of the governor-general and the ladies belonging to the family of the commander-in-chief.

was ratified by Sir George Barlow, then at the head of the British government in India.* The treaty of Mustafapoor recognizes that of Serjee Angengaum (the treaty of peace concluded with Scindia by Sir Arthur Wellesley in December, 1803), and confirms every part of it not thereby altered; but it is entirely silent as regards the treaty of Boorhampoor, and does not contain the common article confirming all previous engagements in so far as they are not affected by the operation of the new one. The treaty of Serjee Angengaum is referred to, and that only. There can therefore be no doubt that this treaty and that of Mustafapoor were intended to be regarded as the only engagements existing between the two states at the time of the conclusion of the latter. The provisions peculiar to the treaty of Boorhampoor were never acted upon, and as it escaped recognition in the treaty of Mustafapoor in 1805, so did it in the treaty concluded with Scindia, under the administration of the Marquis of Hastings, in 1817, though in this latter treaty, as in the former, the treaty of Serjee Angengaum is confirmed. If ever treaty was rendered null, that of Boorhampoor was certainly in that predicament, and its revival in 1843, after a slumber of almost forty years, is not one of the least remarkable points in the remarkable course of policy of which that revival formed part.

Of the treaty which Lord Ellenborough added to the archives of Indian diplomacy it will be un-

* For these treaties, see vol. iii. pp. 378, 383; and vol. iv. pp. 49, 51.

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necessary to speak at large. Of one point notice has already been taken. After determining in March that the regency should be held by a single person, the governor-general consented in December that it should be exercised by a council, thus adding a fresh instance of versatility to a catalogue which before was sufficiently long. So, too, in March, he declared that the regent was to be independent of the Maharanee; in June he avowed that he was not prepared to deprive* the Maharanee altogether of authority;† and in December he did deprive her altogether of authority. But it is unnecessary to catalogue such instances.

A.D. 1844.

On the 26th of February, 1844, the governor-general returned to Barrackpoor, and on the 28th, he entered Calcutta. This was the second anniversary of his lordship's arrival from Europe, and whether the concurrence were designed or fortuitous, it was somewhat remarkable. On the occasion of his return, he received an address from the inhabitants of Calcutta, which falls on the ear with the effect almost of rebuke. His lordship had passed a considerable portion of his time in India at a distance from the ordinary seat of government, a fact noticed by those who welcomed his return in the following manner:— "We, the undersigned inhabitants of Calcutta, beg to present our hearty congratulations on your lordship's return to the presidency, after the accomplishment of the great objects that called you hence to

* "Further Papers," p. 19.

† Ibid. p. 50.

Upper Hindostan. That those objects should have been so promptly and so triumphantly attained, is a matter of national concernment; to us it is doubly gratifying, inasmuch as it enables your lordship to devote the energies of a powerful mind towards measures of internal benefit—second only in real importance to those affecting public security. The presence of the head of this colonial empire is so essential in every way to its prosperity, as to make it but natural that we should bear even his necessary absence with something like impatience, and hail his return with the warmest expressions of satisfaction. That your lordship's residence among us may be continued—that no state emergency may again demand your personal care in other parts of this wide territory, must always be our earnest desire. It will be our study to make that residence as much a matter of choice, as it is of public expediency."

The transactions of the government of Great Britain with the Chinese belong not to a history of India, and here, therefore, the narrative of Lord Ellenborough's administration closes.

No further "state emergency" occurred to call his lordship away from Calcutta; but his residence there was not of prolonged duration. On the 15th of July it became known that his lordship had been removed from the office of governor-general by the Court of Directors of the East-India Company. From this unusual exercise of authority, it must be concluded that the points of difference between Lord

A.D. 1844.

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Ellenborough and those whom he served were neither few nor trivial. The precise grounds of removal were not made public, and, consequently, they can for the present only be inferred from a consideration of his lordship's acts.

Of Lord Ellenborough, as governor-general of India, it is as yet difficult to speak with the freedom which may be used towards the statesmen of a former age. It is certain, however, that his Indian administration disappointed his friends; and if a judgment may be formed from his own declarations previously to his departure from Europe, it must have disappointed himself. He went to India the avowed champion of peace, and he was incessantly engaged in war. For the Affghan war he was not, indeed, accountable—he found it on his hands; and in the mode in which he proposed to conclude it, and in which he would have concluded it, but for the remonstrances of his military advisers, he certainly displayed no departure from the ultra-pacific policy which he had professed in England. The triumphs with which the perseverance of the generals commanding in Affghanistan graced his administration seem completely to have altered his views; and the desire of military glory thenceforward supplanted every other feeling in his breast. He would have shunned war in Affghanistan by a course which the majority of his countrymen would pronounce dishonourable. He might without dishonour have avoided war in Sinde, and possibly have averted hostilities at Gwalior, but he did not. For the in-

ternal improvement of India he did nothing. He had, indeed, little time to do any thing. War, and preparation for war, absorbed most of his hours, and in a theatrical display of childish pomp many more were consumed. With an extravagant confidence in his own judgment, even on points which he had never studied, he united no portion of steadiness or constancy. His purposes were formed and abandoned with a levity which accorded little with the offensive tone which he manifested in their defence, so long as they were entertained. His administration was not an illustration of any marked and consistent course of policy; it was an aggregation of isolated facts. It resembled an ill-constructed drama, in which no one incident is the result of that by which it was preceded, nor a just and natural preparation for that which is to follow. Every thing in it stands alone and unconnected. His influence shot across the Asiatic world like a meteor, and but for the indelible brand of shame indented in Sinde, like a meteor its memory would pass from the mind with its disappearance.

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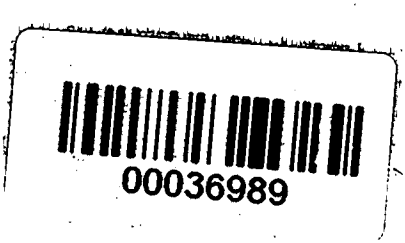

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